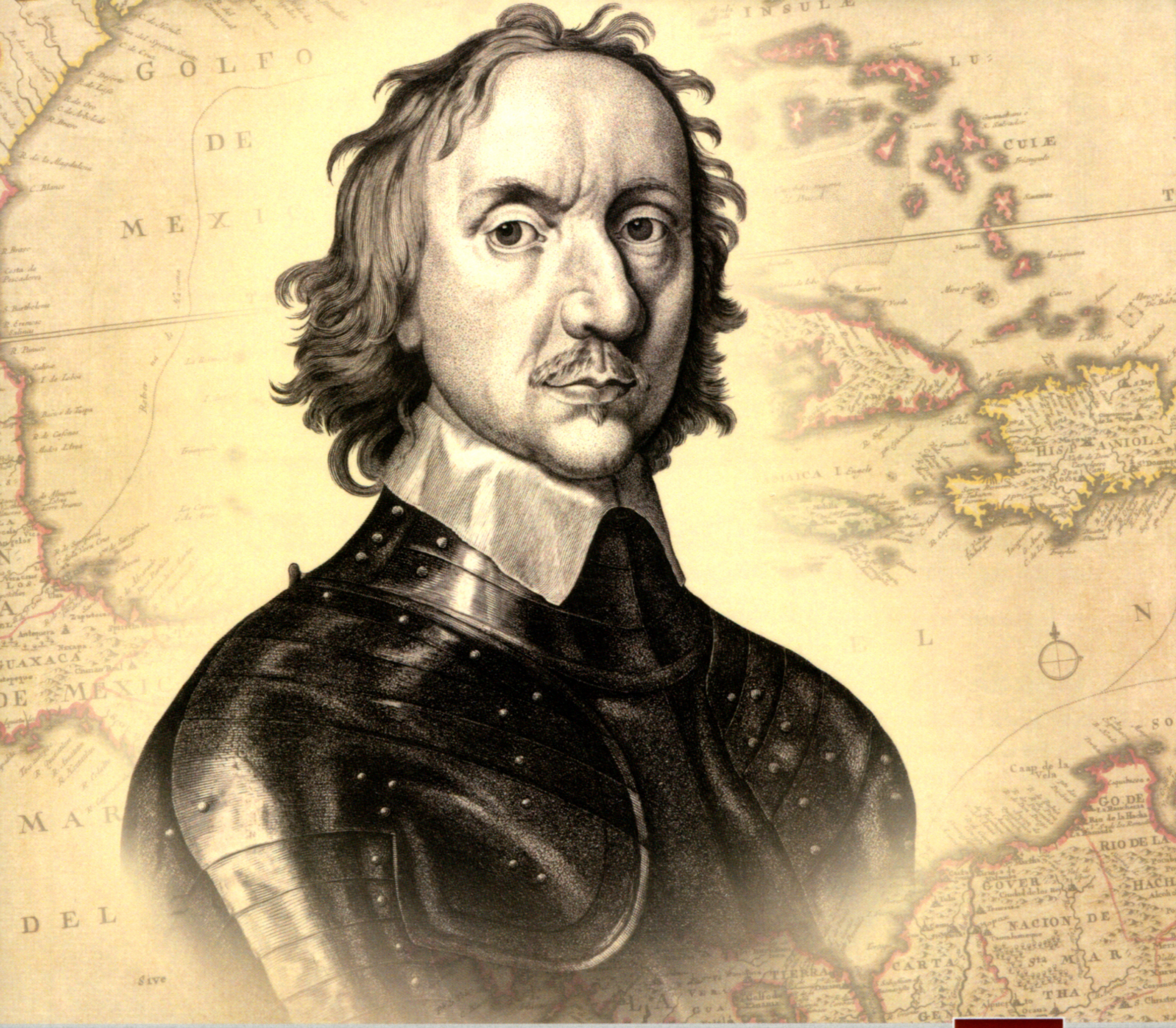
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THE ANGLO-SPANISH WAR 1655-1660

VOLUME 1: THE WAR IN THE WEST INDIES

Century of the Soldier
1618-1721
No.67

PAUL SUTTON

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About the author:

Paul Sutton hails from England but currently resides in Australia. He owns and manages an international removal company that operates across Africa, Asia and the Pacific. He has written numerous articles on different military subjects of the English Civil War period and the Great War. He is married to Kanya and together they have two sons, Stuart and Jamie.

The Anglo-Spanish War 1655–1660

Volume 1: The War in the West Indies

Paul Sutton

'This is the Century of the Soldier', Fulvio Testi, Poet, 1641

Helion & Company

To
Kanya
'Dont forget to remember me'

Helion Editorial Note
Some period terminology is now considered offensive; in this work, such terms have only been retained within historical quotations.

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Preface

The Anglo-Spanish War (1655–1660) was perhaps the world's first truly global war, fought on the Spanish Main in South America, on the islands of the West Indies, off the Atlantic coast of the Iberian Peninsula, in the Mediterranean Sea, the English Channel and on the flat fields of Flanders. It was fought between the proud, once mighty Spanish Empire and the upstart English republic of Oliver Cromwell, egged on by France. It was at the same time both a modern war, fought around the globe with military, commercial and diplomatic aspects, but also an old-fashioned nationalistic, swashbuckling raid and plunder type of war, in the tradition of the late Queen Elizabeth's sea rovers. Conventional warfare between the two nations ended in 1660 but a more unconventional war continued for some decades 'beyond the line' in the West Indies, where English privateers attacked Spanish vessels at will and plundered their holds of the gold, silver and trade goods they carried.

The war had five distinct phases. In the first an English army was sent to the West Indies to seize the wealth of Catholic Spain's American empire, to occupy and colonise Spanish possessions and so forge a new English, Protestant empire. This merged into the second phase which was the war of the privateers which continued in some form or another well into the eighteenth century, but whose origins can be found as a consequence of this war. Back in Europe the third and fourth phases manifested themselves, as the English first fought a war at sea to blockade Spain's ports, to attempt to capture its plate fleets as these galleons brought home the treasure of the New World; then fought a land war in Flanders that erupted as an English army fought alongside an allied French army in an attempt by England to secure a Continental foothold. While all of this was playing out, a fifth phase was being fought in the form of a commercial war. Spanish privateers swarmed out of Dunkirk and other ports in the Spanish Netherlands, attacking English merchantmen on the Channel, the North Sea and even in the fishing grounds off Newfoundland, whilst English merchants in the City of London, hostile to a war the government expected it to welcome, attempted to continue their lucrative trade with Spain in subtle and disguised ways.

The original intention had been to write a single-volume work that covered the entire first phase of the war and to write future volumes on the other phases, but the abundant source material available to the historian has necessitated the division of the first phase of the war in the West Indies into two separate volumes. The first, this present work, will focus on the origins of the war, why the decision was made to attack Spain in South America and the preparations made by the English to send an army and fleet to the far side of the world. It will then describe the expedition's arrival in Barbados, the attack on Hispaniola and occupation of Jamaica up to the autumn of 1655. The second work in the series, *The Anglo-Spanish War 1655–1660: War in Jamaica* will then describe the war of resistance on Jamaica up to 1660, and further English efforts to attack Spanish possessions in South America, and will conclude with an analysis of the English garrison on Jamaica until 1662, the maritime activities of the English in the region during this period and an in-depth look at the establishment and development of the Jamaica colony and economy until the creation of civilian government in 1662. Included in this second work will be appendices on English efforts to bring both Tortuga and the Cayman Islands under English control and the relationship of both to Jamaica.

This is my second attempt at writing the history of the English attack on the West Indies. As a child growing up in England I found a passion for history in general (thanks to Michael Wood's 'In Search of the Dark Ages' TV series) and the English Civil War in particular, and I avidly read every book my local library had on the subject. But this wasn't enough to sate my appetite and one day my father took me to the old and dusty Public Record Office in Chancery Lane, London, and my eyes were opened to the wonders of the seventeenth century treasures (and others) it contained. Still a child at school I delved into the manuscripts it contained and began to realise that the books I had been reading were based on these fragments of parchment written by long dead Englishmen. One day I found to my disbelief that during this period of revolution in English history Cromwell even sent an army to the West Indies, and I soon found lists of provisions and supplies for the expedition in the Record Office and it was then that I decided to write a book on it.

In those pre-Internet and pre-computer days researching and writing was hard, for me at least. It was not just the difficulty in accessing sources but even knowing that sources existed which was a challenge, and using a typewriter to write with even more so. After a couple of years of trying I finally had a completed manuscript, typed and with carbon copies to match, and I was grateful and even proud that Dave Ryan from Partizan Press was willing to even consider publishing it. But even then I knew it was not very good. I acknowledged to myself that I had more passion than ability when it came to writing. Lacking any type of formal writing training I knew I had been unable to fully utilise the sources (there was only so many photocopies a teenager could afford to purchase!) and so I truncated the story to end just after Jamaica was occupied. It was then published in 1990 under the title of *Cromwell's Jamaica Campaign: The Attack on the West Indies 1654–55.* During the final rush to get the publication ready I was preparing to leave England for a year of backpacking around the world and I told myself I could always rewrite it when I got back …

Thirty years later I still haven't made it back to England, not permanently anyway, and so the rewrite never happened. After moving to Australia ten years ago I had both the time and opportunity to revisit my passion for history and was able to start writing military history again. This was during the build-up to the Centenary of the Great War and I became involved in researching the lives of Australians who served in the war, and then wrote some investigative articles on different aspects of the war. Somehow Helion & Company in England read one of these pieces and asked me if would write something for them, and in the course of subsequent discussions in the tea shop of a garden centre outside Banbury the suggestion was made to rewrite my first book.

The difference in researching and writing the first version and this one is startling. With the power of the Internet and search engines all those sources I never knew even existed have been found and, incredibly, nearly everything I needed I could get online for free or at minimal cost. Whilst the precious primary sources still require visits to archive depositories these are no longer dark and dusty but positively a joy to visit, even if the parking fees are a shock! My first effort was cut short by a lack of accessible material whilst this second incarnation has taken longer than I envisaged due to the embarrassment of sources now available to me. It would have taken even longer to write if I had not been able to write most of it when I was supposed to be at work. Whilst I still have more passion than skill I hope the reader will find this work as enjoyable to read as it was for me to write.

This is truly an international work. Not only does it describe events that happened on two continents but the sources have been obtained from England, Spain, America and Jamaica. Whilst most of it was written in Australia, significant parts were written when I happened to be in such faraway places as Thailand, Papua New Guinea, the Marshall Islands, England and America whilst some of my more lucid moments occurred on a plane at 30,000 feet somewhere above the Earth. I even had assistance from some of my staff in India! I hope someday to even visit the places written about.

As with all writers I have a long list people without whose support and encouragement this present work would never have been written. My history teachers at school all those years ago who encouraged me in my passion for history when I seemed to good at nothing else, my parents for letting a 14-year-old boy go on the train by himself to the London Record office (and probably paying the fare as well!), to Chrissy Fletcher who kept reminding me 'show, don't tell' and Professor Murray Johnson for his support, suggestions and care. To Charles Singleton from Helion & Company for his encouragement and patience. To my son Stuart for rushing off to the library at Melbourne Uni at short notice to get copies of books that I couldn't get elsewhere, to my youngest son Jamie for his help digitising and last, but by no means least, to my wife Kanya without whose common sense and love I would have fallen by the wayside many years ago. Thank you all.

Queensland, Australia
23 April 2019
Cry 'God for Harry, England and St. George'.

Conventions

During the seventeenth century the English used the Old Style [OS] Julian calendar which was 11 days behind the New Style [NS] Gregorian calendar used by Spain and France. Throughout this work the Old Style dating has been used unless otherwise specified. Where a dated Spanish source has been cited, or to avoid confusion, the date is first given as [NS] and then as [OS], for example 10 August 1656 [NS]/1 August 1656 [OS], except when the date forms part of a quotation where it has been left in the original form. Also the first day of each year for the English commenced on Lady Day 25 March and not 1 January and so the year number of the date of New Year changed on this day also, hence 24 March 1655 was followed by 25 March 1656. To avoid confusion for the reader all years have been rendered as commencing on 1 January.

The actual spellings used in the contemporary sources have been used throughout even if these appear incorrect by modern usage, and only to avoid significant confusion have individual words been corrected or extended by the use of square brackets [ ]. English sources of the period frequently used the *long s* (ſ) instead of a regular *short s*, as well as ‘v’ instead of ‘u’ and ‘i’ instead of ‘j’. The spelling has been modernised throughout. Likewise the contemporary symbol for pound sterling was ‘*l*’ instead of the modern ‘£’ sign. The contemporary symbol has been used throughout as have ‘d’ for penny and ‘s’ for shilling. Twelve pennies were the equivalent of one shilling, whilst 20 shillings made a pound. A pound consisted of 240 pennies.

Notes on Sources

The historian is spoilt with an abundance of surviving source material that recounts the events that transpired in the West Indies between 1654 and 1662.

The National Archives, Kew (TNA) preserve the Ordnance Office *Journals of Proceedings* (WO47/3) and *Debenture Books* (WO49/87) which provide details, albeit incomplete, of equipment and materials issued to the fleet and the army prior to its departure from England. They also hold various army-related pay and supply papers in the voluminous SP28 series from which much light has been gleaned on (mostly) the officers' careers prior to enlisting in Venables' army. Many documents, reports, petitions and orders of the Council of State have been calendared in the invaluable *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series* (*CSPD*) edited by Mary Anne Everett Green during the nineteenth century, the originals of which can be found in SP18 and SP25 series. Similarly the work of W. Noel Sainsbury in editing the *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series (America and West Indies)* (*CSP Col.*) must be acknowledged, but the original manuscripts in CO1 and CO139 are much harder to locate. Also available at the National Archives are *High Court of the Admiralty* papers (HCA9 and 49) which provide fascinating insight into the workings of maritime justice at the time.

The British Library (BL) of course is a treasure trove of knowledge that includes Add MS 11410 being the original of Venables' *Narrative* amongst others, Add MS 11411 which contains an extensive collection of papers belonging to Thomas Povey which relate to the West Indies, and Additional MS 12430 known as the *Doyley Journal*. This invaluable volume is not a journal but a sort of copy book of orders, commissions, statements and instructions given by Edward Doyley during his tenure as de facto governor of Jamaica and contains an incredible amount of detail relating the early years of the colony and a source surprisingly under-utilised by historians. Much of the description of the army and fleet activities throughout this current work have been drawn from this volume, however the secretary hand is extremely difficult to comprehend in much of it. Thankfully it had previously been painstakingly transcribed into three parts by F.J. Osborne. The first two parts were edited by S.A.G. Taylor and published in the *Jamaican Historical Review* in 1973 and 1978, while a copy of the third part, never published, has been obtained from the *Jesuit Archive and Research Center*, St. Louis, Missouri. My thanks to the kind staff there who provided me with a digital copy. Where the *Journal* has been quoted in the text the citation relates to the page of the relevant transcription rather than the folio of the original manuscript.

In Greenwich, the National Maritime Museum holds the *Wynne Papers* that include the letter-book of William Penn, two seafaring journals written at the time as well as other useful documents. The Huntingdon Library, California is the repository for the *William Blathwayt Papers* which contain some useful papers relating to the provisioning of ships in Jamaica in 1660. Hidden in the list of crew members of an English merchantman (privateer?) in Cagway harbour in early 1660 is probably the first reference to the later privateer *par excellence* in Jamaica, Henry Morgan.

The *Archivo General de Indias* in Seville, Spain contains a lot of original letters from the Spanish side. I have not been fortunate enough to visit the archives but many of these letters have been translated and published and so provide a fascinating insight into Spanish activity. The *Archivo* also contain a collection of fantastic maps and plans relating to events on Hispaniola and Jamaica which have been used extensively in this present work and which are available online at the institution's website, some of which have been produced as colour plates in this publication.

The Thomason Tracts collection of Civil War and Commonwealth era newsletters and broadsheets (TT) have been widely consulted and these are now, thankfully, available on the Internet through Early English Books Online (EEBO). Where cited the first number relates to the microfilm reel which is followed by the item number, which is the same referencing sequence as provided by the EEBO website. Also now available online to the lucky few with access to it through an institution of higher education is the State Papers Online collection, being digital copies of the extensive State Paper collection of the National Archives, Kew. Hopefully this crucial resource will become more widely accessible to historians and students in the future.

The indispensable Thurloe State Papers (TSP) contain an extensive collection of letters sent from the West Indies to John Thurloe, Oliver Cromwell's Secretary of State. Much of this collection was published by Thomas Birch in the eighteenth century, whilst the originals are at the Bodleian Library at Oxford University, Rawlinson Collection.

A surprising number of first-hand English accounts exist that cover the first year of the expedition. Robert Venables' attempts at exonerating himself survive but need to be used with care. *The Narrative of General Venables* is an attempt to clear his name and he blames everybody but himself for the disaster on Hispaniola. His narrative has been edited and published by Sir Charles Harding Firth in 1900 along with a collection of other eyewitness accounts including the anonymous *Letters Concerning the Expedition* and extracts from *Henry Whistler's Journal*. These two provide much detail and seem to be generally reliable without the tinge of bias that Venables' own account contains. However as Whistler was a naval officer his comments about Venables are particularly scathing. Also included in this publication are transcripts of various commissions and other letters plus the muster rolls of the army on Barbados in March 1655. None of these accounts continue beyond the end of 1655, however. William Penn left no personal testimony of his activities at this time but Granville Penn's *Memorials of the professional life and times of Sir William Penn* (1833) includes transcripts of Penn's letters and the *Swiftsure Journal*, the originals of which are held at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. All were written at the time and concern the detail of managing a fleet at war, and so are considered a more accurate depiction of events without the influence of hindsight. Other first-hand accounts include the scathing attack on Venables by the mysterious I.S., which was published in the *Harleian Miscellany Vol. 6* (1810), and much of Venables' own narrative is his own attempt to discredit the accusations of negligence and incompetence made by I.S. of him. The anonymous *Narrative of the Expedition to San Domingo*, published in *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3 (1891) is believed to have been written by an officer in Fortescue's regiment and is deemed a reliable source, as are the letters of Francis Barrington contained in the Duke of Portland's papers and published in *Seventh Report of the Royal Commission of Historical Manuscripts* (1879).

The early years of the occupation of Jamaica are well documented in the various letters from Doyley, Goodsonn, Sedgwick and Brayne to be found throughout the *Thurloe State Papers*. Edmund Hickeringill's *Jamaica viewed...* (1661) and William Beeston's journal commencing after his arrival in 1660 and reprinted in *Some interesting tracts relating to the island of Jamaica* (1800) throw some interesting light on the early colony, as does Edward Long's *A History of Jamaica* (1774). Long was a descendant of one of the English officers in Venables' army. Extra detail regarding these early years can be found in the numerous letters found in various volumes of the *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series (America and West Indies).*

Much background biographical detail on many of the participants has been obtained from the online version of the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. These have been simply cited as *ODNB* followed by the person's name and the editor of that particular biography.

A full compilation of printed sources consulted in the preparation of this work and cited in the text will be found at the rear but some deserve special mention. All serious historians of the period are indebted to the work of Sir Charles Harding Firth whose passion and ability seemed to have had no bounds. My personal indebtedness to this gentleman can be measured by the number of works he produced, without which I, and countless others who have tried to emulate him, would not have had the benefit of his labours. For the West Indies war alone his works consulted include *The Narrative of General Venables* (1900), *The Clarke Papers* (1891), *Letters and Papers Relating to the Military Government of Scotland* (1899), *Cromwell's Army* (1902), and *The Last Years of the Protectorate* (1909), as well as *The Regimental History of Cromwell's Army* (1940) (with Mr. Godfrey Davis, FBA) and *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum* (1911) (with Mr. Robert Sangster Rait). In a similar vein the works of Professor Samuel Rawson Gardiner are invaluable, especially his epic *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate* (1903).

Frank Cundall's *Historic Jamaica* (1915) is a mine of anecdotal detail from somebody who lived in Jamaica whilst his and Joseph Pietersz' *Jamaica under the Spaniards* (1919), which published for the first time Spanish archive material regarding the war from the *Archivo General de Indias* in Seville that had been translated by Miss Irene Aloha Wright. Miss Wright also translated *The English Conquest of Jamaica* (1924) and *Spanish Narratives of the English Attack on Santo Domingo 1655* (1926) for the Camden Society, without whose energy and linguistic skills this present work would be very one-sided.

More modern works include S.A.G. Taylor's *The Western Design* (1969) and the numerous articles that he contributed to *Jamaican Historical Review* and whose local knowledge proved invaluable. Professor Robert Brenner's *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550–1653* (1993), whose work on the colonial adventures of the English was an inspiration, as was Mr. Arthur Newton's *The Colonising Activities of the English Puritans: The Last Phase of the Elizabethan Struggle* (1914). Professor Bernard Capp's *Cromwell's Navy: The Fleet and the English Revolution 1648–1660* (1989) provided insight into the workings of the navy. I cannot but acknowledge the various works of Professor Carla Gardina Pestana on the subject of early English colonisation of the Americas, in particular *The English Conquest of Jamaica: Oliver Cromwell's Bid for Empire* (2017) and whose comments on a previous attempt to write this book inspired me to do better this time. I hope I have been successful in this. Also used extensively was Dr. Timothy Venning's *Cromwellian Foreign Policy* (1995) which made a complex set of issues understandable to me. And finally Professor Nuala Zahedieh's articles *The Merchants of Port Royal, Jamaica, and the Spanish Contraband Trade, 1655–1692* (1986) and *Trade, Plunder, and Economic Development in Early English Jamaica, 1655–89* (1988) were both informative and stimulating.

Mention should also be made to the various online resources used. The State Papers Online, EEBO and *ODNB* have already been mentioned. British History Online is a fantastic resource that has the Calendar of State Papers, Commons Journal and Thurloe State Papers available which are all easily keyword searchable. Also of great benefit was the Cromwell Association's Online Directory of Parliamentarian Officers on the same website. Both the Internet Archive and Hathi Trust have made many of the nineteenth century (and later) publications used available online for free download and their administrators ought to be commended for making so many historical sources accessible to students of all hues. JSTOR was a mine of obscure journal titles. Finally the often maligned Wikipedia which, whilst it must be treated with as much care as any source, provides a convenient overview of topics and was used as a base for further research and background detail.

I hope that I have done justice to the sources available as well as to the work of those who have gone before me.

Part 1

1

The Road to War

When war broke out between England and Spain on the island of Hispaniola in April 1655 it was not the inevitable result of years of rivalry between the two nations as is often the case when two rival powers go to war. Nor was it seen as inevitable that a war in Europe between the two nations would be the natural consequence of this unprovoked attack by the English in the West Indies; at least not by the English at any rate. Indeed, many contemporary observers of the events in the years prior to 1655 thought a war between England and France a more likely scenario than one with Spain. And yet the war that started when the English waded ashore through the tropical waters close to one of the oldest Spanish settlements in the New World would be fought out across the Caribbean, in the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. It would be fought in the Canary Islands, off the Spanish coast and the along the length and breadth of the English Channel. Furthermore it would lead to an English army fighting in Continental Europe for the first time in almost two centuries, besieging heavily fortified towns and even participating in a full-scale battle amongst the sand dunes of the northern French shoreline, with a major port city being granted to England as the prize of war. Even after peace was formally agreed between the belligerents in Europe the war continued where it had begun, beyond the line, in the Caribbean, where it was conducted by privateers and pirates for more than another decade with the connivance of the English authorities. At the height of the war England seemed to be the most powerful nation in Europe, in the world in fact, with one man dictating the course of nations. How did the paths of England, wracked by civil war for the previous decade, and Imperial Spain, collide to create a global conflict which was to presage wars to come?

In the years immediately following the establishment of the English Republic in 1649 there was an evident sense that a new era of English involvement in European affairs was about to begin. In reality, since the end of the Hundred Years War almost two centuries previously, England had played no meaningful role in Continental affairs, a decline of power and influence compounded by the surrender of Calais, England's last Continental possession, in 1558. The Kingdom of England had played a significant role in western European affairs ever since the Normans had seized the English throne in 1066 but after the fall of Calais the rise of France and its clashes with the newly established Spanish nation had dominated western European affairs. The Tudor monarchs had been too preoccupied with domestic politics and national survival to involve themselves with events across the Channel, whilst the Stuarts' lack of resources, and an even greater lack of judgement, made them even more ineffectual players in European politics. The unconventional English government that was born after a decade of civil war in the middle of the seventeenth century appeared enthusiastic and willing to play a more engaging role in politics on the Continent, especially in religious matters, where it saw itself as a protector of Protestants across the Continent. Indeed, it was soon being considered that a political union between it and the other great Protestant and republican power, the Dutch, could be concluded creating an alliance powerful enough to challenge the traditional balance of power in the world, towards one dominated by Protestants rather than Catholics. There was even talk of an agreement to split the known world into spheres of political and commercial influence, with the Dutch dominating the lands to the east of Europe and England those to the west. These ambitious goals came to nothing however as both nations squabbled over more mundane issues and were soon at war with each other over trade, but the fact that these plans were even mooted and discussed illustrates the confidence that the English now possessed and their willingness to play a significant and influential role in international affairs.[1]

Following the execution of Charles I in 1649 England had been governed by a Council of State appointed by the remnants of the Parliament first elected in 1640, known to history as the Rump Parliament. However there was soon friction between the Parliament and the army, whose soldiers had defeated the enemies of Parliament and who now maintained them in power, which led in April 1653 to Oliver Cromwell, by then commander-in-chief of all the English armies, forcibly dissolving Parliament. Parliament was initially replaced by an ideologically nominated assembly, later known as the Barebones Parliament, but this proved to be as uncooperative with the army as its elected predecessor had been and just as ineffectual at governing the country. The army, frustrated by consensus government, chose to replace it with a more practical form of governance and subsequently it prepared England's first written constitution, the *Instrument of Government*, in which an appointed head of state known as the Lord Protector held executive authority in conjunction with, and with the advice of, an appointed Council of State. A Parliament was to be called every three years to ratify all laws passed by the Council, to discuss matters of national importance and to legislate the raising of any new taxes. The Lord Protector and Council had the authority to manage foreign policy and conduct foreign wars between the sittings of the parliaments. Oliver Cromwell, the most powerful man in the country, was subsequently appointed Lord Protector for life and inaugurated in this new role on 16 December 1653. In reality Cromwell had been solely governing the country since the military coup in April but had also been one of the most influential members of the government for some years prior to that as well, by virtue of his command of the army and by the reputation he had earned on the battlefields of England, Ireland and Scotland over the past decade.[2]

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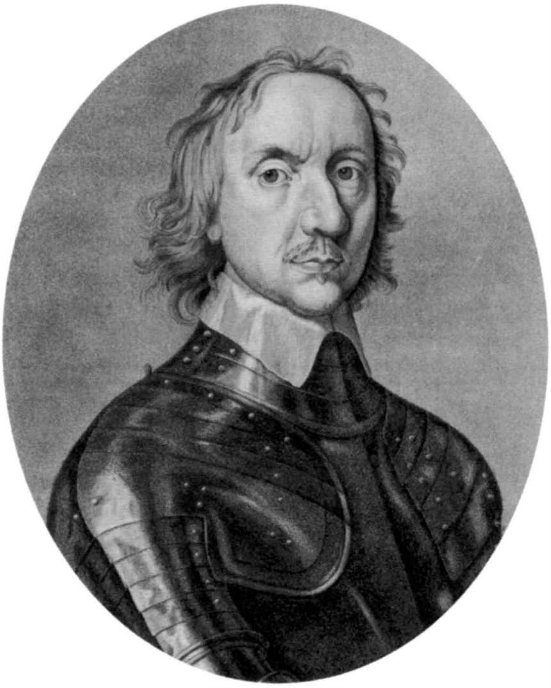
[1] Samuel Rawson Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, 1649–1656*, Vol. 2 (London: Longmans, Green and Sons, 1903), p.169; Timothy Venning, *Cromwellian Foreign Policy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), pp.154, 159–161.



Portrait of Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector of England *c.*1653–1664, Jan van de Velde, after Robert Walker. (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1890-A-16095)

The government that Cromwell inherited was far from stable, though. Despite the Royalist threat having been comprehensively defeated during the Third Civil War in 1651 the rule of Parliament and the Commonwealth had been far from easy. It could not take its acceptance by the country for granted for there were still many loyal to the deposed House of Stuart and who actively sought the Parliament's downfall, but now there were many Republicans smarting at the overthrow of their government by the army. Politically and religiously the country was still split with competing factions vying for influence and power throughout the political establishment, both nationally and in the shires. Economically the country was in recession and the populace was burdened with the high taxes necessary to maintain the army in England, as well as the military occupation in Ireland and Scotland, but which was vital to retain the army government in power. Many also were tired of the constant wars and just wanted peace and a return to normality, which all added to general instability of the nation.

To make matters worse, by the end of 1653 England was involved in an expensive and unpopular war against the Protestant Dutch Republic, one that was being fought out in the English Channel and the North Sea. This war had broken out in 1652 as a consequence of the English Navigation Act promulgated the previous year. The Act was designed to curb Dutch interference in traditional English seaborne trade by prohibiting them from carrying goods on their own vessels into English ports but it soon brought them into confrontation with the English. During the past several decades the Dutch had replaced the English as leaders in the maritime carrying trade around Europe as they carried cargoes for both the French and the Spanish, who themselves had a minimal merchant marine of their own. They had also encroached upon English trade with its American colonies during the Civil War and the jealous City of London merchants were keen for the fledging Republic to impose an embargo of all Dutch trade both with England but also within the English Channel. The Act gave English ships the right to board any vessel in the Channel and to seize contraband cargo. To add further insult it was decreed that any Dutch vessel in the seas around England was required to lower its flag to any English vessel it encountered in a show of respect and humility. Not surprisingly these demands were resented by the Dutch and soon their refusal to comply led to full-scale war at sea.

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[2] See Gardiner, *Commonwealth*, Vol. 2, Chapters XXVI, XXVII and XXVIII.

Many in the new English government, including Cromwell, were opposed to the war with their Protestant brethren and very soon after seizing power Cromwell made overtures to bring the war to a swift end. Dutch Commissioners had been invited to England in July 1653 to negotiate an end to hostilities whilst the English were seemingly in a position of military advantage. After having lost the first naval encounters of the war England had reorganised its navy, by June 1653 Admiral Robert Blake had commenced a blockade of the Dutch coast and by the end of July the main Dutch fleet had been defeated at the Battle of Texel and its inspirational leader, Maarten Tromp, killed. The Dutch knew they could not now defeat the English at sea and so they willingly pursued a peace, but Cromwell, whilst desirous to bring the war to a swift conclusion was determined to do so only on favourable terms. The Lord Protector was concerned that the non-Republican Orangist party in the Netherlands, who openly supported the exiled Charles Stuart and called for his restoration, would attain positions of influence within the post-war Dutch government and so be in a position to assist Charles in his scheming to regain his throne. After some diplomatic wrangling in early 1654 a treaty between the two nations was agreed upon and hostilities ceased, although it was more an agreement forced upon the Dutch than a mutually agreed and beneficial outcome of negotiation. Cromwell had received the assurances he needed that the Dutch Republic would not harbour any enemies of the English State, meaning Charles Stuart and his supporters, and the Dutch government agreed nobody of the House of Orange would attain high office from where they might assist the Royalists. It was also agreed that compensation for losses by both sides in the war would be discussed but that the Dutch would still bound by the terms of the English Navigation Act, meaning that only English vessels could transport cargoes to or from English ports, precluding the Dutch from legally participating in the carrying trade with England that had been a major part of their seaborne commercial trade. The peace was formally signed at Westminster on 5 April 1654.[3]

Even though the war between England and the Dutch Republic was at an end, another war in Europe showed no signs of ending, with both France and Spain embroiled in a war of attrition that had started in 1635. The kingdom of France had grown in size and power throughout the sixteenth century and was by early in the following century strong, rich and increasingly ambitious even though it was hemmed in on three sides by its Spanish Hapsburg adversaries, which frequently led to conflict between the two powers. France shared a border with Spain along the Pyrenees in the south-west, with the Spanish Netherlands (modern-day Belgium and Luxembourg) in the north-east and along the Hapsburg-dominated Franche-Comté (Burgundy) border with the southern German states and Switzerland. Also, in close alliance with Piedmont in north-west Italy, the French constantly clashed in northern Italy with the Austrian Hapsburgs. The war of 1635 had begun as a result of French financial support for Sweden and the north German Protestant states in their fight with the Catholic Holy Roman Empire, ruled by the Austrian branch of the Hapsburg family, a conflict which had sparked the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War in the early 1620s. Spain entered the war in 1635 hoping to crush the French-supported rebellion in the Spanish Netherlands and to finally defeat the rogue Dutch Republic, with whom they had been intermittently fighting since 1555 in their attempts to secede from the Spanish Netherlands, which was naturally encouraged and supported by the French. France, unprepared to give Spain a free hand to interfere on its borders, entered the war that was now being fought on the Continent causing a general conflagration across Europe.[4]

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[3] Samuel Rawson Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, 1649–1656*, Vol. 3 (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1903), pp.61–70.

After much vicious fighting a general peace in Europe was concluded with the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 between the various belligerents but neither France nor Spain were prepared to cease hostilities between themselves. In France the strains of the war had led to economic unrest and a widespread refusal to pay the ever greater taxes needed to fight the war. Added to this were demands for the Crown to uphold the traditional privileges of the towns that were being constantly eroded by an ever more authoritarian monarchy and together these created sufficient resentment for an outright rebellion to erupt in 1648, that became known as the *Fronde*. The initial rebellion against the young King Louis XIV soon petered out when no external assistance was provided to the fractious rebels, but it soon reignited into a revolt led by disgruntled nobles against the authority of the monarchy. The nobles were angry at the loss of their traditional rights and power by first the powerful Cardinal Richelieu and then his protégé Cardinal Mazarin, successive chief ministers to the French monarchs, as both attempted to strengthen the monarchy's position of power and authority within the country. This opposition centred on the princely Condé branch of the House of Bourbon and its leader Louis II, Prince of Condé, previously a successful general in the French army but who had become disgruntled with the regime when he and his fellow nobles were constantly excluded from positions of authority within the government, which they believed to be their right. France drifted into open civil war as Condé and his followers fought against the Royalist forces of Mazarin and the boy-king, but he was eventually defeated at the Battle of Faubourg St. Antoine in 1652. Condé and the remnants of his army then marched north and allied themselves with the Spanish forces in Flanders, with whom he fought until the end of Franco-Spanish War in 1659.[5] A major supporter of Condé's rebellion was the Duke of Bouillon, whose more famous brother was the soldier Henri de La Tour d'Auvergne, better known as Marshall Turenne.[6] Initially himself a supporter of Condé, Turenne was reconciled with the French Crown in 1651 and was afterwards promoted commander of all the Royalist forces which then defeated Condé in 1652,

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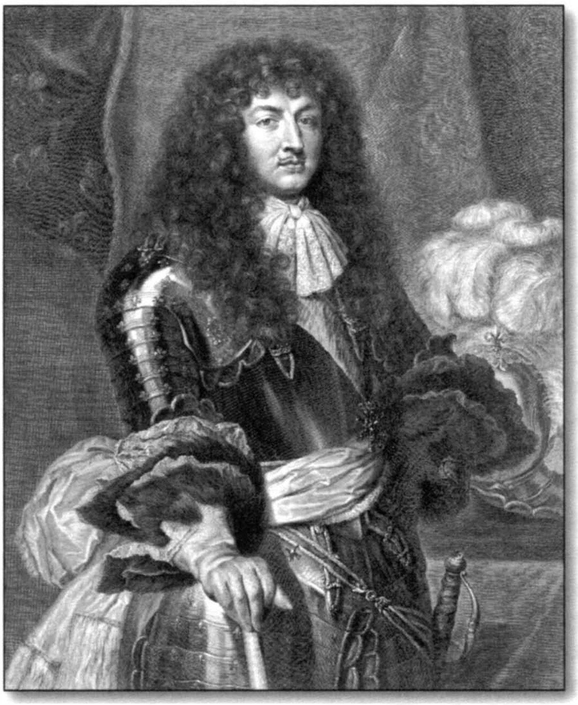
[4] See C.V. Wedgwood, *The Thirty Years War* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1938), for a general overview of the Thirty Years' War.

[5] See Gordon George Stuart, *The Fronde: The Stanhope Essay 1905* (Oxford: B.H. Blackwell, 1905).

[6] For more on the life of this military genius see Thomas Longueville, *Marshal Turenne* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907).

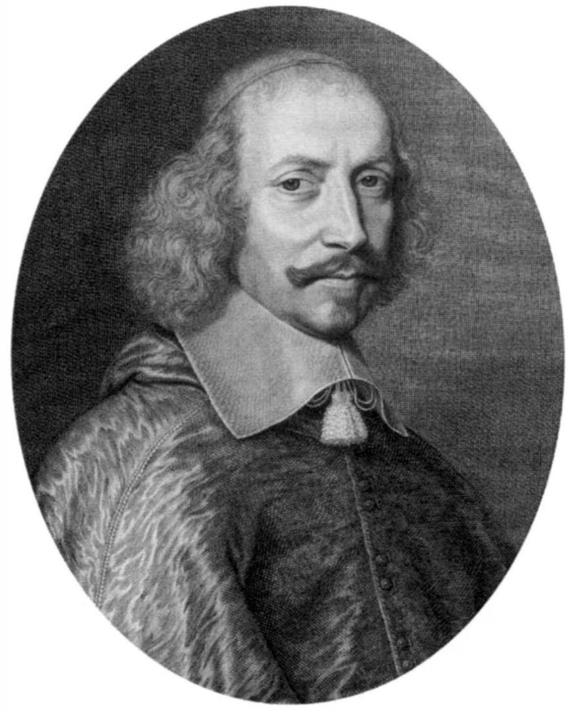


Portrait of Louis XIV, King of France c.1644–1671. Nicolas Pitau, after Claude Lefebure. (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-61.146)

after which he was to command the French army fighting the Spanish in the Low Countries. By 1657 events had transpired such that Turenne's French army, which by then included English regiments sent by Cromwell, was fighting a Spanish army in Flanders, in part commanded by Condé himself. This army included a significant force of exiled English Royalists, Scots and Irish Catholics under the command of James, Duke of York, son of the executed Charles I and a future king of England. The twists of fate that led to the war between the three great powers in Europe had their origins in the decisions made by one Englishman in early 1654, though the root causes for this conflict went back much further in time.

As the new decade dawned in 1650 both Spain and France were in desperate need of a powerful ally that could help turn the tide of war between them in their favour and inevitably both looked towards England for assistance, despite both nations' traditional hostility towards the island nation. They had both watched the English Civil War unfold from afar, too busy with their own concerns to interfere despite their natural sympathy for an English monarchy under threat. With the execution of Charles I it was apparent to both that the natural order in England had been overthrown and that the Commonwealth seemed likely to be around for some years to come, so out of a practical necessity each needed to moderate their national foreign policy to recognise the new political reality in England. With neither nation prepared, or even capable, of providing any direct assistance to the by now exiled English monarchy, they both needed to consider how England could be wooed into at least a relationship of amity, but perhaps even more, despite the disdain of both the Continental powers as to what had transpired in England over the past decade. For both powers an alliance with England would be beneficial but this was perhaps less important than ensuring that their enemy did not form an offensive military alliance with England in their stead. The Protestant Commonwealth after all had at its disposal a large and well-trained army which could be unleashed upon the Catholic powers of Europe if it were so inclined. England was perceived to be a threat to both nations. It was unpredictable, powerful, and confident but could no longer be ignored. Either they needed to be made an ally or an alliance between the English and their enemy needed to be avoided at all costs and it was this need that ultimately led to the war between England and Spain.

Circumstance, however, first brought closer relations between England and Spain when Blake blockaded Prince Rupert's Royalist fleet in Lisbon during early 1650. The Spanish quickly recognised the common ground between them and the English as Spain was embroiled in a conflict over Portuguese independence and so sought to capitalise on the new relationship with the English. Blake relied upon supplies for his fleet from either Vigo



Portrait of Jules Mazarin, 1655, Robert Nanteuil. (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam RP-P-1948-76)

or Cadiz in Spain to maintain his blockade, supplies which the Spanish were happy to provide as a gesture of good faith. Later, in 1651, when Admiral William Penn and his fleet entered the Mediterranean Sea seeking the Royalist fleet he also sought resupply from Spanish and not French ports. Again, Spain was happy to oblige as the Royalist fleet had initially been established with French assistance and could just as easily be directed against Spain as England. When Rupert managed to escape the blockade at the end of 1650 he immediately headed for the French harbour at Toulon, where he was warmly received by the French, much to the annoyance of both the English and Spanish governments. Despite almost a century of animosity between the two nations, political expedience and military necessity had nudged the two together and it seemed a window of opportunity now existed from which perhaps a closer relationship might be forged.[7] As a natural consequence of the improvement of relations with the English, the Spanish government dispatched an envoy to London in December 1651 and in so doing became the first major power to formally recognise the Commonwealth government.[8]

However the *rapprochement* between the two soon soured after the official English representative in Spain, Anthonie Ascham, was murdered by some exiled Royalists in May 1650, with his murderers seeking sanctuary in a Madrid church. The English government believed the Spanish insincere in their attempts to bring the murderers to justice but the king, Philip IV, was unable, or unwilling, to anger the powerful Catholic Church and contravene the sanctuary laws of his country to arrest the murderers. In February 1651 Parliament formally notified Philip that there was no possibility of a friendship blossoming between the two nations unless his murderers were brought to justice and they were not placated when finally one was hung for the crime, whilst the others escaped justice. The King of Spain did banish two representatives of Charles Stuart from his Court as a gesture of goodwill, but this still was not enough to pacify the English government. The incident exposed how complicated and fraught relations between the two were likely to be, even if there was sufficient shared interest that brought them together. At this time the Spanish saw that the English Commonwealth was in a precarious position at home and despite defeating the Scots at Dunbar in 1650 Charles Stuart was still in Scotland drawing support from the disaffected there and in England. Spain might have desired cordial relations with the English Republic but they still felt the need not to alienate the Royalist cause in case it ultimately triumphed. At this stage the Spanish saw the English as a useful, but not essential ally, but were keen to ensure any French influence with them was curbed.[9]

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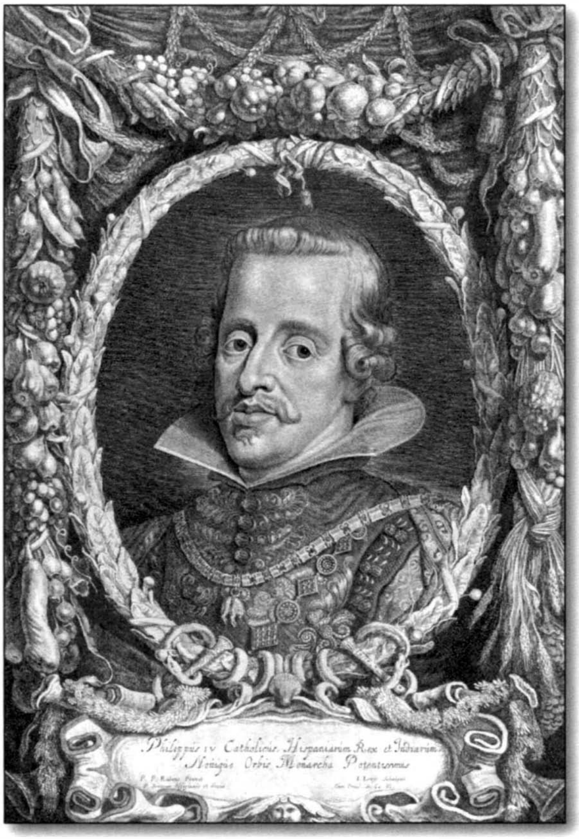
[7] Samuel Rawson Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, 1649–1656*, Vol. 1 (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1894), pp.330–339.

[8] Gardiner, *Commonwealth*, Vol. 1, p.342.



Portrait of Philip IV, King of Spain c.1615–1657, Jacob Louys. (The Metropolitan Museum, New York 51.501.7557)

French attempts at fostering better relations with England proved just as complicated. France was in a more politically sensitive position than Spain, for Henrietta Maria, wife of the executed English king and mother of the would-be king Charles Stuart, was also the aunt of Louis, King of France. During the Civil War she had lived mainly at the French court with her children, openly seeking support and funds for her embattled husband amongst the French nobility and naturally became a focus of opposition once the war was over and many exiled Royalists headed to join her in Paris. French support of Prince Rupert's Royalist fleet and open support for Royalist exiles led to a commercial war with England breaking out after 1646 in which both sides attacked the other's shipping and relations between them deteriorated as reprisals escalated. The English saw French meddling in events at home as a sign of their natural hostility towards the Republic but despite this Cardinal Mazarin, the French King's chief minister, recognised the benefit of cordial relations with the English government. In late 1650 and again in early 1651 Mazarin sent personal envoys to London to assure England of the peaceful intentions of France and that he wished to negotiate an end to the commercial hostility between the two, and of France's wish to develop better relations with the new republic. Mazarin's position of power in France was far from secure at the time however and his approaches failed to convince the English government of France's, or his, sincerity. The English were not prepared to hold any discussions while the French refused to formally acknowledge the new government or while they continued to attack English shipping and so both envoys were unceremoniously dismissed. France at this time, just like Spain, saw England as a useful potential friend but deemed the regime too unstable to court seriously.[10]

However, the political situation in England changed dramatically on 3 September 1651 when a joint Scottish–Royalist army, fielded with some French tacit support, was roundly defeated at the Battle of Worcester, dashing all hope of a Royalist restoration for the time being. With Cromwell's victory came the realisation across Europe that the Commonwealth was for now secure at home and so it was better to be on cordial terms with it, no matter how repugnant they thought the regime, than to be openly hostile towards them. It was not long before the two dominant European powers stepped up their attempts to foster better relations with the English and with these the possibility of military alliance might develop. However, the first suggestion that England should intervene militarily on the Continent came from a surprising source and one that would have worried both Spain and France.

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[9] Gardiner, *Commonwealth*, Vol. 1, pp.342–345.

[10] Gardiner, *Commonwealth*, Vol. 1, pp.346–348.

The Prince of Condé by instigating his rebellion had set the south of France alight in 1650 but he was unable to make any headway against the French Royalist government and sought assistance from whatever country would be willing to help him. As a consequence of Condé's rebellion England began an involvement with Continental European affairs that would ultimately lead to the Anglo-Spanish War of 1655, with English armies fighting in the West Indies and Flanders. In October 1651 Condé sent representation to both Spain and England to seek assistance in his war against the French Crown. Not surprisingly he received a friendly response from the Spanish, ever keen to meddle in affairs that would weaken France and a treaty was soon signed leading to Spanish troops being sent to establish a garrison at Bourg, on the River Dordogne, close to Bordeaux, to provide Condé with assistance. In London, Oliver Cromwell, then still merely commander of the English army, was approached by an emissary of the Condé with a request for 100,000*l* in cash and an army of 10,000 men to support the insurrection. Cromwell derisively replied that he would come with 40,000 foot and 12,000 horse in person if he could be assured that at the end of the struggle France would become a republic like England. As this was an unlikely turn of events the envoy returned empty handed to his master.[11] A second envoy was later sent who this time promised Cromwell that he could send an English force to occupy and garrison the port city of La Rochelle, in the heartland of French Protestantism, but whilst this request was also refused it had become apparent to Cromwell at least that now England held a strong bargaining position over the European state, with offers of European territory being ceded as a price for its support. England had historically held lands in Europe but these were gradually lost over time and now the possibility of it obtaining a port city in Europe, so long cherished, seemed to be within reach for the first time in a century. Both Spain and France would have been concerned that the Condé was even having these discussions directly with the English and both soon stepped up their own efforts to foster better relations with the English.

It is doubtful that either the Council of State or Cromwell would ever have considered a serious alliance with the arch-conservative Condé, unless by doing so it unsettled France to such an extent that England would benefit elsewhere. Inexperienced in diplomacy as the new government was they would certainly have recognised the great risk involved in supporting a rebellion, for they knew better than anyone how difficult it was to overthrow a government and to then retain power. However, Cromwell was curious to know more about conditions in France and the mood of the people, particularly in the areas of the country controlled by Condé but more especially in the Protestant Huguenot areas of the south-west. Should any Continental involvement eventuate it would have been Cromwell's responsibility to command the English forces and so he wanted to appreciate the strength of support that Condé had within France, and know whether he was likely to have the strength and resources to overthrow the government of the French Crown. But he also wanted to learn of the conditions of the Protestants in France and if they were suffering any repression from the Catholic majority, contrary to the terms of the Edict of Nantes which had guaranteed their liberty of conscience. Cromwell wanted to gauge their appetite for armed insurrection against the French government and to better understand their desires and their expectations from their fellow European Protestants. There was still a degree of guilt felt by the English for how they had let the Huguenots down in 1628, a betrayal that was certainly remembered by the French Protestants. Cromwell sent the Leveller and former agitator Edward Sexby to France in late 1651 to report on conditions there, but Sexby proved to be anything but suitable for the task at hand. Nevertheless he did, eventually, return and provide some local knowledge on conditions in the country but by which time events had moved on and England had found itself at war with the Dutch.[12] Yet Sexby's mission did illustrate the seriousness of Cromwell's interest in European affairs, even if he was unable to dictate events fully himself at that time, whilst it also demonstrated his determination to link the rights and condition of fellow Protestants with the English national foreign policy, a theme that was ever present in his later foreign policy.

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[11] Gardiner, *Commonwealth*, Vol. 2, p.154.

Whilst Sexby was in France in late 1651 events in northern France created a situation whereby England might intervene in a more practical and immediate manner in European affairs and which established the first meaningful dialogue with the French government. Whilst the French army was distracted by the civil war at home, Spanish forces had been able to push westwards along the Channel coast from the Low Countries towards the port city of Dunkirk. Historically part of the French kingdom, Dunkirk had been occupied by the Spanish since 1583 but had been recaptured by the French in 1646 and in whose custody it had remained after the Treaty of Westphalia. In the autumn of 1651 a Spanish army encircled the city but the French garrison was ill-prepared for a siege and its governor, d'Estrades, knowing that relief from the French army was unlikely given its distractions elsewhere, sought alternative options for salvation. His initial attempts at enticing the Dutch Republic to come to his aid came to nothing however. Knowing of the precarious situation the city was in Cromwell sensed an opportunity for intervention and this led to his first efforts to interfere in Continental affairs. In November Colonel Fitzjames, a former Royalist officer, was en route to Dunkirk from England when he was co-opted by Cromwell, without the knowledge of the Council of State, to send a message to d'Estrades informing the governor that England might be open to discussions about providing a garrison for Dunkirk to bolster its defences, in return for its cession to

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[12] Gardiner, *Commonwealth*, Vol. 2, pp.156–157.

England. With no diplomatic relationship between the two governments this sort of back-channel communication was the only way that Cromwell could make his unofficial proposal known to the French government. D'Estrades saw this as a possible salvation for the city, and whilst it is unknown whether he had the approval of his government he wrote to Fitzjames telling him that he would hand the city and port over to the English if Cromwell sent a garrison to occupy it immediately. Cromwell was obviously hoping that his contact with d'Estrades would lead to an official proposal from the French government for support that he could take to the Council of State, but instead it appeared to be from d'Estrades personally, and the request included a meaningful financial reward for the governor himself. It is possible that d'Estrades acted under instruction from Mazarin in this, but if so it was informal and deniable, but due to the vagueness of the proposal Cromwell ignored the d'Estrades letter. Had Cromwell acted upon it and occupied the city it would have been through the seemingly treacherous actions of d'Estrades which would leave the English open to accusations that they had forcibly taken the city duplicitously, something that would erode England's credibility in Europe and its subsequent attempts to retain the city. In January of the following year a letter from d'Estrades to Fitzjames was intercepted in England and brought to the attention of the Council of State who, now aware of Cromwell's dealings, seized upon the idea of securing the long-cherished foothold in Europe. To this end emissaries were sent to Dunkirk to discuss the matter further. The French government, loath as they were to deal the English Commonwealth, or to handover Dunkirk, were however pragmatic and informal discussions between the two governments began. If France could not save Dunkirk then for the English to hold Dunkirk was perhaps better than for the Spanish to possess it and at the time the French situation was desperate so it seemed the English were the lesser of two evils. D'Estrades even travelled to England to discuss the matter further, almost certainly with the approval of Mazarin. By early 1652 it seemed that Dunkirk was within the grasp of the English and an English fleet was prepared to secure the city whilst in April a large force from the army assembled in Dover ready to be transported to Dunkirk if an agreement with the French could be struck.[13]

At this point Mazarin had second thoughts about sacrificing Dunkirk to the English for little more return than stopping the humiliation of losing it to the Spanish. To cede Dunkirk to the English required a more substantial gain than this, and so Mazarin made it known to the English that the French would shortly send an official envoy to London to discuss a broader cooperation, effectively recognising for the first time the Republican government. With the envoy was to come an offer of an alliance between the two powers against Spain in which the English should pay a considerable sum for Dunkirk, utilise the English fleet to defend French ports along the Channel and send a force to relieve Gravelines, a strategically important outpost of Dunkirk. However, the envoy was deliberately held back in France for some weeks, possibly to see if the military situation changed sufficiently in France's favour so they no longer needed the English assistance but also as Mazarin was still sceptical about giving the English a foothold on the Continent. However when Gravelines fell to the Spanish it was clear that the French had run out of options and a serious approach needed to be made to the English. Probably as a sweetener and a show of good faith to the Protestant English, on 11 May 1652 King Louis issued a proclamation confirming the Edict of Nantes, which had protected the rights of Huguenots in France since 1598. But when the envoy was finally sent to London in mid May he had instructions to not agree to allowing an English force to occupy Dunkirk, as Mazarin was by then gambling that he could get an English alliance without giving up Dunkirk, although in the end the port did surrender to the Spanish later in 1652. With the prize of Dunkirk having been offered it was unlikely that England would now accept a lesser price for their assistance, and so not surprisingly the envoy soon returned to France empty handed, and for the English the dream of the European foothold was dashed, at least for a time. Within a few weeks of these negotiations England was at war with the Dutch and it was to be another 18 months before England, now with Cromwell as Lord Protector, would be free to consider European intervention.[14]

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[13] Gardiner, *Commonwealth*, Vol. 2, pp.159–166; Venning, *Foreign Policy*, p.41.

Despite the initial English overtures towards Spain and France bringing nothing of substance during the years since the establishment of the Commonwealth, they do demonstrate that Parliament and Cromwell understood the art of diplomacy and the need to negotiate to achieve their desired outcome. The English certainly showed that they were not novices in the art of diplomacy and they had established at least some dialogue with both nations, who now treated England as an equal on the diplomatic stage, which was a measure of success in itself. Cromwell now knew that he could command a high price for England's involvement in European affairs and that he had a strong bargaining position. These early foreign policy efforts also illustrate two strands that would later come to the fore in his Protectorate foreign policy: concern for the Protestant interest in Europe and the imperative of securing a European port from which influence could be better wielded on the Continent, both of which would play crucial parts in the events that led to the war with Spain. But it is also important to note that at least prior to the Dutch War Cromwell was more inclined to cordial relations with Spain than France, despite the events surrounding the possible cession of Dunkirk and his deeply held aversion to the Spanish nation. The catalyst for his anti-Spanish stance was only to come in 1654 when the political situation had changed in Europe. But by the end of the Dutch War, a war Cromwell detested, England's hand was better than ever. England had defeated the might of the Dutch navy and this brought a greater respect, grudgingly given perhaps, from Spain and France. It also gave the English the most powerful navy in Europe, added to an undefeated army that it already possessed, and this made England a force to be reckoned with. More importantly Cromwell was by then firmly in control of the country and the government in his capacity as Lord Protector. As 1654 began one question remained unanswered. How would Cromwell use this power that was, in his opinion, divinely given?

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[14] Gardiner, *Commonwealth*, Vol. 2, pp.167–169; Venning, *Foreign Policy*, p.41. For a more detailed examination of this intriguing episode of diplomacy see Samuel Rawson Gardiner, 'Cromwell and Mazarin in 1652', *The Economic History Review (New Series)*, Vol. 11, no. 43, 1896.

By the end of 1653 Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell now controlled all aspects of government policy, albeit with approval of the Council of State. He had shown an interest in foreign affairs prior to becoming Lord Protector but was not then the sole arbiter of judgement within the government and the limitations of his influence are clearly seen by his inability to prevent the Dutch War from breaking out in 1652. But by the beginning of 1654 he was able to review his foreign policy options from his new-found position as the primary instigator of policy rather than being just one voice amongst many, as had previously been the case. He would have recognised that there were many factors that would influence his policy decisions, some matters of principle and others of expedience, and that these would impact the choices he was now required to make. For the end of the Dutch War provided him with the opportunity to establish new priorities in dealing with other nations without the encumbrances of the legacy of past regimes. Certainly it is doubtful that he considered that peace overseas was to be a likely option. The English Republic had been born out of war and it was the army, the instrument that had been crafted by Parliament to bring about victory over Charles I, that underpinned the rule of the Protectorate. Cromwell was a child of that war, as were his supporters and his advisers, and to him war was now a natural state, not for the sake of violence itself, but as a tool of God's Providence. It was also an instrument for change, to remodel the natural order for the betterment of England, as he saw it, and for implementing God's will. War was not seen as a last resort as it is in more modern times but as an extension of other forms of diplomacy and statesmanship. Whilst the Lord Protector might have preferred peace he would not shy away from war; he did not need to. At his beck and call was the most professional army in Europe and a powerful navy, and with the English victory over the Dutch now assured, England had a gained an enviable reputation on the world stage; after half a century of ridicule under the Stuart kings it had now forced the rest of Europe to view it with the greatest of respect, if not admiration. As an indication of Cromwell's new-found enthusiasm for international affairs, in October 1654 a globe was purchased for 50*l* and set up in Whitehall 'for the use of his Highness' to ponder his international options, and a year later a set of atlases were also bought for Cromwell's use.[15]

Cromwell's new regime had one overarching imperative, as indeed had each of the governments since January 1649 and which dominated all policies and priorities that emanated from its core: survival. The English republican regime which assumed power in 1649, despite its attempts to justify itself, held no legitimate mandate to govern the country. With no definitive constitution, England had been governed for centuries by tradition and precedent, by a political elite headed by the monarch and a

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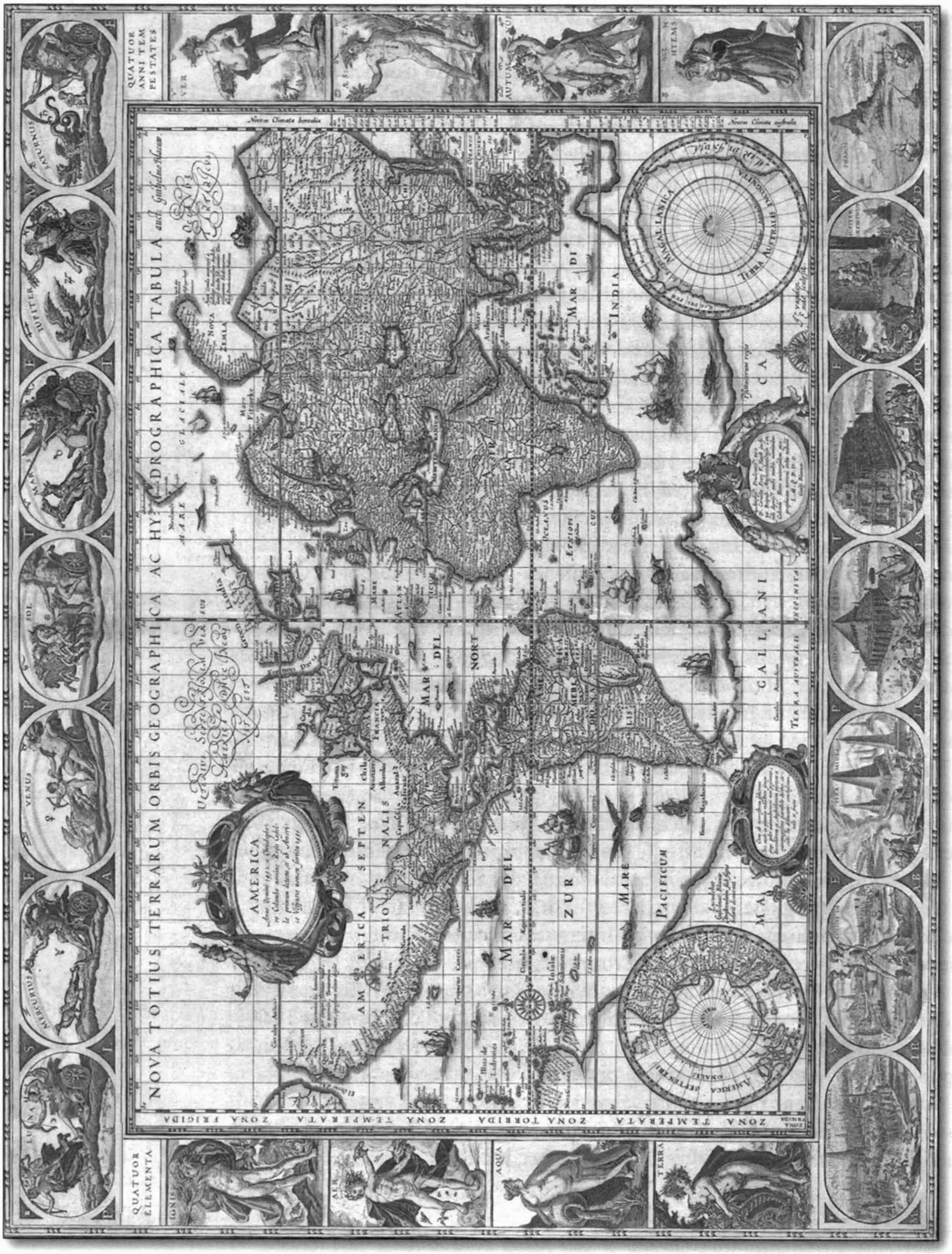
[15] Mary Anne Everett Green (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1654* (London: Longmans & Co, 1880), p.457; Mary Anne Everett Green (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1655* (London: Longmans & Co, 1881), p.364.


NOVA TOTIUS TERRARUM ORBIS GEOGRAPHICA AC HYDROGRAPHICA TABULA
QUATUOR ANNI TEMPESTATES
VER
AESTAS
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QUATUOR ELEMENTA
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SATURNUS
IUPITER
MARS
SOL
VENUS
MERCURIUS
LUNA
AMERICA
MAR DEL ZUR
MARE PACIFICUM
MAR DEL NORT
OCEANUS AETHIOPICUS
MAR DI INDIA
MAGAL LANICA
TERRA AUSTRALIS
NOVA ZEMLA
FRANCIA
ZONA FRIGIDA
ZONA TEMPERATA
ZONA TORRIDA

Nova totius terrarum orbis geographica ac hydrographica tabula, c.1635–1649, Jan Aertse van den Ende. (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1958-66) See colour plate A.

nobility which supported it in return for power, wealth, favour and political influence. Representation from other segments of society in this power sharing arrangement was only reluctantly ceded to representatives of some parts of the general population, the wealthy non-nobility, landed gentry and merchants, in the form of an elected Parliament, but only out of a necessity and only to obtain a broad-based approval for the ever greater demands for revenue that the government needed to fund its policy priorities. Over time the power and influence of Parliament grew as the financial constraints of the Crown forced it into making ever more compromises with the elected assembly regarding the rights and privileges of the people in return for Parliament agreeing to contribute yet more taxes. Inevitably this led to conflict as one party attempted to limit the authority of the other in the tug-of-war for control of the nation's finances. This conflict sometimes led to outright hostilities and civil war, as had happened in 1642. This latest conflict, tinged with religious, commercial and other nationalistic overtones, created a chain of events that led to the King being deposed and executed, leaving the way open for Parliament to choose to govern in the place of the traditional elite. But whilst there was historical precedent for deposing a monarch and replacing him with another, there was no precedent for changing the entire form of government.

Furthermore there was no clear mandate from anybody in the country that this revolutionary change in style of government was assented to. It was certainly opposed by many of the ousted ruling elite, with the son of Charles I being the natural figurehead of opposition. Many outside of this former ruling elite also opposed it on the grounds that it was too radical and revolutionary, including many moderate members of the Parliament and pre-war opposition to the government, not to mention republicans angered by the installation of the quasi-monarchical Protectorate. Furthermore it could also not be assumed that the mass of the population, who had no influence over political processes or events anyway, were in agreement with the disruption of the natural order had their opinion been canvassed. Popular revolt was an ever present concern for the new government and there were plenty of disgruntled elements that might attempt to force a change. The Commonwealth was brought about by force of arms and the governments that followed were all maintained by force of arms. Understandably those that opposed the new regime could, and often did, resort to violence in their attempts to challenge this new order for a return of the old. In the years that followed the execution of Charles I the single most important challenge that faced successive governments was the threat, both internal and external, to forcibly overthrow it and restore the deposed House of Stuart, or some other form of government, and so the need to forestall any such action was the obvious priority for the government. The exiled Charles Stuart, hailed king by his followers, was the primary opponent of the new regime and around him many of the deposed former elites and other malcontents rallied and plotted revenge upon the regicide government in England. The Royalist cause, defeated militarily at home, lacked the resources and finances themselves to mount an effective military challenge to the government that had usurped them and so it was only natural that they sought assistance from sympathetic governments abroad. The only two nations in Europe that had the resources, or the inclination, to assist Charles Stuart regain his throne were the warring Catholic states of Spain and France. Luckily for the English government the two were embroiled in a lengthy war of supremacy across Europe and so neither were in a position to provide any overwhelming military assistance to Charles, and it was unlikely that this would change as long as they remained at war. A general peace between the two would likely lead to both nations scheming to assist Charles in regaining his throne for their own political benefit, rather than as a sense of solidarity for a deposed monarch. Therefore the obvious priority in foreign policy for the English government was to ensure that no general peace was to be affected between the two Continental powers that could lead to either nation providing assistance to the exiled Royalist cause. So obvious and natural was this policy that the intriguer Colonel Sexby wrote to Cromwell in 1654 that 'This is England's and your Highness's interest to prevent the makeing [of] a generall peace is soe obvious to the weakest witt and dimest sight, that I shall not insist upon it to acquaint you what prejudice and danger would insue from it, your Highnesse being fully satisfied therein.'[16]

Of the two warring powers it was the French, rather than the Spanish, who the English feared would be more likely to provide Charles with the resources he needed to attempt a serious challenge to regain the throne. Blood ties, proximity, historical hostility towards the English nation, a tradition of alliance with Scotland against England (Charles was, after all, king of the Scots as well) and the resources to fund it, all made France seem to be the natural supporter of Charles. Spain, perceived by many to have been critically weakened by continued wars in Europe fought to maintain its hegemony, had little to gain by supporting the Royalist cause but was also desperately short of money, despite having the wealth of the Americas in its possession. But both powers were pragmatic and concerned only with their own self-interest, first and foremost. The crowns of both nations might be sympathetic to the overthrow of a king, and would feel threatened by the precedent it set, but both saw that it was not directly their problem and felt no imperative to assist Charles, unless it was in their own national interest. Both nations were masters of intrigue and diplomacy and so both were keen to see how Charles' misfortune could be spun to their own advantage in the larger, and more important game, being played out between them. In the double-dealing contest of high stakes diplomacy, that greater advantage might well be gained not in supporting Charles, but by supporting the English government, regicide and heretic though it was.

The first half of 1654 saw a flurry of diplomatic activity as both France and Spain sought to conclude some sort of agreement with the English to benefit themselves in their war with the other. As an eminent historian has eloquently and accurately put it, 'To the two Continental powers it seemed that England was put up to auction, and that Oliver was the salesman.'[17] With England's great military strength a lure, both sides became increasingly more desperate to ensure Cromwell chose to ally with them in an attempt to break the stalemate of their war. Cromwell, on the other hand, was in no rush to make any formal commitment to either nation, happy to play one off against the other as he aimed to strike the best deal for England. Despite the military strength at his disposal the Lord Protector was well aware of the parlous state of the English finances and that war, if it came, was cost prohibitive, especially if it was fought in mainland Europe. In 1654 Spain initially suggested an alliance with England that would involve war against France during which Spain would contribute 120,000*l* to pay for the English forces and in return England would be ceded Calais, if and when it was captured. France, on the other hand, promised Dunkirk to England with their offer to pay for the English army. Attractive as both offers were, Cromwell was also concerned of the condition of Protestants in both countries and insisted that any alliance between either nations included safeguards for them as well. Alliance with either would allow the opportunity to provide oversight of, and influence over, the Protestant minorities in the territories of both and it would establish Cromwell as their de facto guardian. It could also be used to provide greater toleration of the religious practices of English residents in both countries. Cromwell had heard rumours that the Huguenots in France were under constant persecution by the Catholics and that they were on the verge of rebelling; if true, Cromwell believed he would be honour-bound to defend them, which would inevitably lead England into conflict with France, and so closer to Spain.

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[16] Sir Charles Harding Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers: Selections from the papers of William Clarke, secretary to the Council of the Army, 1647–1649, and to General Monck and the commanders of the army in Scotland, 1651–1660*, Vol. 3 (London: The Camden Society, 1891), p.197.

A treaty with Spain could open up trade with Spanish territories in the New World which was currently only open to a limited extent to Dutch merchants but not legally to the English. England had a large merchant fleet and was keen to develop the carrying trade between Spain and its empire as well as seeking access to markets in Spain and the Spanish Netherlands. Spain was deemed a minimal threat in supporting a Stuart restoration, unlike France, so any form of offensive alliance with Spain had the additional benefit of potentially disrupting French plans to sponsor a military attempt at restoration. On the other hand a condition of a treaty with France could be the latter's abandonment of support for the exiled Royal Family, forcing them from France and pushing them further away from the French ports vital for any seaborne attempt to reclaim their throne. English commerce, disrupted by the commercial war in the Channel, would be free to continue with France while French ports in the Mediterranean would be open to English shipping, allowing merchants to seek further opportunities in southern Europe and beyond.

In the first half of 1654 two events occurred, or more precisely did not occur, which swung Cromwell's decision in favour of an anti-Spanish foreign policy. Despite Spanish promises to pay for English military intervention against France it became obvious that Spain would be unable to find the money required for this, and with no ability to pay, it would be impossible for the English to provide Spain with any military assistance.[18] Furthermore it was now believed that, contrary to what he had previously heard, the Huguenots were not disgruntled and that they were not on the verge of rebelling against the French Crown, and so it would not be necessary for England to provide them with any military support in the foreseeable future.[19] Support for the Huguenots would necessarily put England into conflict with France and into a closer alliance with Spain, and also likely support a Protestant French uprising. These two factors together settled Cromwell's mind that English interests were best served by a pro-French and anti-Spanish policy, though not necessarily in the form of military confrontation in Europe. Cromwell therefore decided that he would conclude a commercial alliance with France, ending the bitter trade war, whilst not being rushed into any military alliance that would lead to war in Europe with Spain. This anti-Spanish policy opened the door to the long-cherished desire to attack Spain in the Americas to seek redress for perceived past wrongs and even to gain access to the wealth of the Spanish Empire, an attack that he perceived, naively, would have no real consequences in Europe. It was the decision that this anti-Spanish policy would be aggressively, and militarily, pursued in the West Indies that led to all-out war with Spain in Europe. Whilst this final decision on both the anti-Spanish policy and the decision to make an unprovoked attack on the West Indies were only made during the early summer of 1654 it is clear that Cromwell had seen them as likely scenarios for some months and had made some preliminary plans accordingly.

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[17] Gardiner, *Commonwealth*, Vol. 3, p.123.

A memorandum dated 20 April 1654 exists written by Edward Montagu, a member of the Council of State, in which the merits of both a pro-Spanish and pro-French foreign policy were discussed. The historian Sir Charles Firth believed the memorandum to be a document written as a result of a Council meeting held that day in which foreign policy matters were discussed, but there is no record that a formal Council meeting was held on that date. Most likely it was prepared as a result of a meeting on a different date or perhaps an informal meeting of some the senior councillors met that day to discuss the matter.[20] The memorandum argued that war against Spain was a more preferable option as it would help to continue the war between France and Spain, and provide a block to any French aid to the exiled Royalists as well as discouraging Scottish rebels hoping for French assistance. It argued France would only provide overt assistance to opponents of the English government if there were open hostilities between the two nations. Alliance with France would provide the English with influence over the French government to ensure better treatment for the Huguenots whilst France was also the traditional ally of the northern European Protestant states, with whom the English desired closer ties. John Lambert, who supported a pro-Spanish policy, argued that any anti-Spanish policy would be disastrous for English commerce with all ports in Spain and Flanders likely to be shut to English trade while English access to the Mediterranean could be restricted by Spanish occupation of Gibraltar.[21] The memorandum further discussed the practicality of attacking and seizing Spanish possessions in the West Indies and establishing permanent colonies on them. This policy, it was argued, would be 'the most profitable of any in the world'.[22]

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[18] Venning, *Foreign Policy*, p.51.

[19] Firth (ed.), *Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.203.

[20] Firth (ed.), *Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, pp.203–206; Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, pp.xxxvii, 110–111.

The notes of this meeting that still exist do not provide a confirmation that the anti-Spanish policy was agreed upon during this discussion but it is evident that much thought had already been given to it. Two sea captains with experience in the Caribbean were called to give advice on Spanish possessions there along with the strength of their defences and so they must have been notified some time in advance to attend, suggesting that serious consideration had already been given to an attack there at the highest levels of government. The notes suggest that there were more advantages than disadvantages to the policy but most likely the meeting concluded with no final decision having been made, allowing the members more time to deliberate and to wait on other events. However the first step in the direction towards war had been taken. The first mention of preparations being made for an offensive dimension to this anti-Spanish policy can be seen in an order from the Council dated 5 June 1654 wherein 14 warships were ordered to be made ready 'for the Western Design' and so it seems likely that by the end of May the decision had been made, though perhaps still contingent on the final approval of the Council.[23] On 23 June it was even noted in a letter most likely written by a Royalist in England notifying exiles in France of events at home, that the fleet was planning to attack Hispaniola or Mexico. It therefore seems likely that the Council had agreed in principle by the early summer that Spain would be the object of England's new foreign policy and that such a policy was to have an aggressive military dimension.[24]

At a meeting of the formal Council held on 20 July there were still arguments between Cromwell and Lambert as to the benefits of such an attack, which suggests that even then unanimous agreement had not been reached within the Council.[25] Cromwell argued that Providence had led the English to this point and that an attack on Spain was God's will. They had considered different options in Europe but an attack on the West Indies was the most likely to succeed. They needed to utilise the fleet rather than lay it up and the cost to lay off many of the ships would equate to the cost of sending the fleet to the West Indies anyway. Cromwell believed the expedition would pay for itself in the long run as the rewards from sending 'six nimble frigates' to prey on Spanish shipping would 'quitt cost'. He further argued that to delay now would mean the expedition would never be sent. He also maintained it was for the good of the Protestant cause in general and that as the Spanish 'have denied you commerce unless you be of their religion. We cannot suffer our people to go there and be idolaters.'[26] Lambert, unafraid to confront Cromwell over this, claimed the expedition was 'improbable' to succeed, it was too far from home while they had more pressing problems to solve in England, nor did he believe it would be profitable nor benefit the Protestant cause. He was also concerned of the spread of tropical disease amongst the expedition and that settlers would not flock there unless 'unlesse you be settled there in peace'.[27]

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[21] Venning, *Foreign Policy*, p.48; Firth (ed.), *Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, pp.203–206.

[22] Firth (ed.), *Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.203.

[23] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.201.

[24] Rev. W. Dunn MacRay, *Calendar of the Clarendon state papers preserved in the Bodleian library*, Vol. 3 (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1869), p.379; Thomas Birch (ed.), *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. 2 (London: Fletcher Gyles, 1742), p.414.

[25] Firth (ed.), *Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, pp.207–208.

Cromwell explained to his fellow Councillors that:

> Wee consider this attempt, because wee thinke God has not brought us hither where wee are but to consider the worke that wee may doe in the world as well as at home, and to stay from attemptinge untill you have superfluitye [*sic*] is to putt it off for ever, our expenses beinge such as will in probabilitye never admitt that … Now Providence seemed to lead us hither, haveinge 160 ships swimminge: most of Europe our enemyes except Holland, and that would be well considered also: we thinke our best consideration had to keep up this reputation and improve it to some good, and not lay them up by the walls. Thence wee came to consider the two greate crownes, and the particular arguments weighed, we found our opportunitye point this way.[28]

Cromwell might well have been the powerful Lord Protector but under the Instrument of Government he was required to act upon the advice of the Council of State and so he needed to persuade his colleagues by argument rather than simply ignore their opinions and proceed regardless. These two meetings demonstrate that he faced opposition to his proposal to attack Spain and that he needed to convince the members of the merits of his plans though inevitably, perhaps, it was Cromwell's view that prevailed and the expedition was finally authorised. However it is telling that Lambert, seen by many as Cromwell's protégé and a possible successor as Lord Protector, understood the likely consequences more clearly than did the short-sighted Cromwell, and that he foresaw the dangers that both disease and continual warfare would bring.

And so the decision was made: England would embark upon an anti-Spanish foreign policy whilst seeking closer relations with France. Thurloe explained the Protectorate's policy, albeit with the benefit of hindsight, in a later memo dated 1660 when he stated:

> so it was resolved to take all oportunityes to maintayne a good understanding with France, and to send a fleet and land forces into the West Indies, where it was taken for granted the peace was already broken by the Spanyard contrary to the former treatyes; and not to meddle with any thing in Europe, untill the Spaynard should begin, unless the American fleet should be met with, which was looked upon as lawful prize.[29]

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[26] Firth (ed.), *Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, pp.207–208.

[27] Firth (ed.), *Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.208.

[28] Firth (ed.), *Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, pp.207–208.

[29] Thomas Birch (ed.), *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. 1 (London: Fletcher Gyles, 1742), p.761.

Given that Cromwell and his Council had agreed upon an anti-Spanish policy, why did they believe an anti-Spanish policy was a natural policy for England, why did they chose to attack Spain in the far off West Indies and not closer to home, and why did they believe that the war could be contained there and not spread to Europe? Many factors, beyond practical expedience, would have influenced Cromwell and his fellow statesmen into formulating the view that England's interests were best served by an anti-Spanish policy.

The English had a long-held prejudice against Spain and the Spanish. This had developed in the post-Reformation world when Spain, by then financed by the wealth of the Americas, had assumed the role of defender of the Roman Catholic church which put it into conflict with the newly established Protestant states of Europe, including England. Spain, through the marriage of Prince Philip and the Catholic Queen Mary of England in 1554, had hoped to draw England back into the fold of the Catholic Church but this failed, and when Mary was succeeded by her Protestant sister Elizabeth the two countries embarked upon a collision course that would lead to all-out war in 1585 that lasted for 18 years. English attacks upon the Spanish in the West Indies, fighting in the Netherlands, the constant Catholic scheming to overthrow Elizabeth and the defeat of the Spanish Armada helped turn Spain into England's antithesis. During this time popular opinion in England began to view the Spaniard as cruel, repressive, treacherous, sinful, greedy and immoral. Numerous books concerning the supposed barbarous acts of cruelty of the Spanish against the native inhabitants of the New World and their Protestant brethren in the Netherlands were published in England, which helped fuel this increasing hatred towards the Spaniards. The peace of 1603 with Spain was seen by many of the English as a humiliation for they had gained nothing as a result of their participation in it whilst the Stuart kings perceived support for Catholicism in Europe and their attempts to marry Prince Charles to a Spanish princess only compounded the fears the English had for the Spanish and mistrust of their motives. That Spain still held a hatred for all things Protestant was clearly demonstrated by their actions in the Thirty Years' War and their cruel treatment of any Protestant that fell into their hands. This hatred of the Spanish extended beyond the government and into the general population as the popularity of the various polemical pamphlets written by Thomas Scott that were circulated in England during the 1620s demonstrate. Many in England were desirous to continue the war with Spain in the decades prior to the Civil War and these were Cromwell and his advisers' formative years, and so it was not surprising that they had a deep and abiding hatred of the Spanish and so were easily convinced of the merits of an anti-Spanish foreign policy. And so when in his speech to Parliament in 1657 Cromwell spoke of Spain as being the natural enemy of England, and his various attempts at justifying the war with Spain, he struck a chord that resonated amongst much of the country.[30]

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[30] For a fascinating insight into the growth of English anti-Spanish feeling up to 1660 see William S. Maltby, *The Black Legend in England: the development of anti-Spanish sentiment, 1558–1660* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1971).

This animosity towards Spain was integrally linked to the deep-rooted hatred that many in England held for Roman Catholicism itself. Ever since the English Reformation there had been dramatic, and frequently violent, confrontation between Protestants and Catholics in the country which had fostered an air of alarm and suspicion of all Catholics by much of the population. Many English Protestants saw this clash of belief in simplistic terms as a struggle between good and evil, with the Catholics portrayed as the enemy of the true faith, everything they did was perceived as ungodly and a certain paranoia developed across the land where Catholics were blamed for many of the ills that afflicted the land. Catholic attempts to subvert England away from Protestantism manifested themselves in frequent acts of violence, such as the persecutions under Queen Mary in the mid 1550s, the attempted murder of the country's ruling elite during the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, and during the Irish Revolt of 1641–1642, while the more recent massacre of the Piedmont Protestants in April 1655 only exacerbated these fears. This confrontation also had a political dimension to it, as it seemed to many that the Catholics continually attempted the overthrow of the natural order of Protestant government in the country, with the Gunpowder Plot and the Spanish Armada being the most prominent examples, but also in the more subtle ways of Charles I and Archbishop Laud as they seemingly attempted to draw the country back to Catholicism. A more recent manifestation of the threat posed by Catholics was Charles I's various attempts to obtain Catholic assistance to provide foreign troops with which to continue the civil war against Parliament.

It was therefore natural that as head of the Roman Catholic faith the Pope was seen as the main instigator of all these attempts of subterfuge, and he was pilloried as the Antichrist by many of the more radical Protestants in England, whilst it was commonly believed that it was the House of Hapsburg, and in particular the Spanish kings, with their access to the seemingly unlimited wealth of the Americas, that was the force behind all of the plots and violence against Protestantism in Europe. It was therefore a logical conclusion that any attempt by the English to limit the interference and meddling by the Pope, the Catholics and their primary benefactor, the King of Spain, in the affairs of Protestantism across Europe and England, should begin with interrupting their ability to finance such mischief by seizing the source of its wealth in America. With this wealth being seen as the source of its interference it was not surprising that many people in England, including some of those at the very head of the government, believed that it was God's will that the Spanish be overthrown in the Americas and the wealth they controlled be put to a more divinely inspired purpose.[31]

Most Protestants in England during the seventeenth century believed in some form of predestination, meaning that God had predetermined the outcome of all events on Earth, and by extension whether an individual would find salvation or not. God's intervention in worldly affairs, as he orchestrated events on Earth in tune with his own master plan, was called divine providence. As God's ultimate will was unknown to mankind, those that sought to understand God's actions looked to interpret worldly events by seeking clues and comparisons in the various scriptures in the Bible which in turn led to much debate between theologians and the ordinary believer as to what precisely a particular Earthly event actually meant and how it was interpreted as divine providence. Inevitably this meant that if the outcome of worldly events seemed to benefit an individual, a group or a nation this was seen as God's approval of their actions and so was a part of His greater plan. If, however, the outcome seemed to be a failure or to bring some disadvantage to those attempting to interpret it, then the event itself was seen as a sign of God's disfavour. When the latter occurred this almost always led some to seek an understanding as to why God was displeased with them and the inescapable conclusion was that the participants were too sinful to obtain God's blessing at that time. Even though most people were unable to necessarily interpret events themselves it was widely believed, and broadly accepted, that nothing on Earth happened without God's involvement. Some individuals were perceived to have a greater ability than others to interpret or comprehend the meaning of these events and they were afforded a great respect within their communities whilst their opinions were highly valued by their peers and the greater community. Some also believed that they were themselves an agent of God, through whom He dispensed His providence.[32] Cromwell certainly believed that he was one such agent, for as he explained during the Putney Debates of 1647, 'I am one of those whose heart God hath drawn out to wait for some extraordinary dispensations, according to those promises that he hath held forth of things to be accomplished in the later time, and I cannot but think that God is beginning of them.'[33] This self-belief had been brought about by his personal involvement, and even leadership in, many of the dramatic events since the outbreak of the Civil War which, to the Puritans at least, was proof that God had orchestrated the events and outcomes as part of His predetermined plan and that Cromwell had been singled out as a person worthy to play a significant part in the proceedings.

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[31] O. Stanwood, *The Empire Reformed: English America in the Age of the Glorious Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, Inc., 2011), pp.5–7.

As Cromwell was constantly seeking to interpret God's divine providence, the end of the Dutch War gave him much to ponder. Despite early military setbacks England had been victorious, and convincingly so, but what did this victory mean in terms of God's predetermined plan for Mankind? From Cromwell and England's perspective this was the last of a great line of victories that had changed the entire structure and fabric of the nation and so seemed to be confirmation that the English were on the chosen path. But what next? If the Dutch War was but the latest step along this path to a predestined future, where were the English to strive next? Surely the ultimate goal was the utter destruction of the Antichrist in the form of the Pope, his Catholic supporters and his main benefactor, the House of Austria in the form of the King of Spain? With peace at home and now peace with England's Protestant neighbour the Dutch Republic, did this mean that the next step was war with Spain, whose defeat would inevitably lead to the domination of the known world by the Protestant powers of Europe, and if so, who better to lead them than England? With his deep-rooted belief in the righteousness of the Protestant cause and his personal belief that he was an instrument of divine providence, it would have been hard for Cromwell to see it any other way. In his soul-searching he would have seen that all the victories he had participated in were proof that God intended him for some great design whilst the spiritual advisers that surrounded him, like Hugh Peter, would undoubtedly have reinforced this view. It is therefore no surprise that at the 20 July Council of State meeting at which he convinced the Councillors to attack Spain, he invoked divine providence to sway the waverers, claiming that, 'wee thinke God has not brought us hither where wee are but to consider the worke that wee may doe in the world as well as at home', and that 'Now Providence seemed to lead us hither, haveinge 160 ships swimminge' as a result of England's victory over the Dutch, and that it was clear that God was calling to use them in some great design and that undertaking seemed to be clearly found in the Scriptures.[34]

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[32] The concepts of predestination and divine providence are difficult to grasp. For a more fuller explanation and debate on how these concepts effected seventeenth-century England see Blair Worden, 'Providence and Politics in Cromwellian England', *Past & Present*, no. 109, 1985, and C. Hill, 'Providence and Oliver Cromwell', in I. A. Roots (ed.), *Cromwell, a profile* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1973).

[33] Sir Charles Harding Firth (ed.), *The Clarke papers: Selections from the papers of William Clarke, secretary to the Council of the Army, 1647–1649, and to General Monck and the commanders of the army in Scotland, 1651–1660*, Vol. 1 (London: The Camden Society, 1891), p.378.

One passage in the Bible, the meaning of which was much debated and which many, including Cromwell, sought to understand, was Revelation 16:12: 'And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared'. This passage was believed by many to herald the end of days, or perhaps the end of the current order on Earth. In a more literal sense it could also be understood to mean that if the Euphrates, being the giver of life, bounty and wealth to the ancient lands of Mesopotamia and from where the prophecies had been born, were to dry up, it would lead to the downfall of civilisation. Some Puritan divines, prominent amongst them being John Cotton, a former adversary of Archbishop Laud who fled to Massachusetts in 1633, believed it to be an allegory for the West Indies. He expounded in a series of sermons in 1642 that the Americas, with its seemingly boundless wealth, was the Spanish Euphrates and that if the wealth could be seized from them then Spain and the Pope would surely fall, ushering in a new age which Protestantism would lead.[35] If Cromwell had not met Cotton before he fled England he would certainly have known of him and possibly followed his sermons, many of which were printed in London. At some time prior to 1651 Cromwell began to correspond with Cotton to seek his advice in determining God's will. Such was the high regard Cromwell had for him that in October 1651, only days after his stunning victory at the Battle of Worcester, he wrote to Cotton seeking his opinion on the great victory and requesting his interpretation of God's providence and what prophecies were now being fulfilled. According to Samuel Sewall, a later prominent figure in the Massachusetts colony and an associate of Cotton, Cotton replied to Cromwell 'that to take from the Spaniards in America would be to dry up Euphrates'. This, it could be argued, can be seen as an encouragement to follow up the victories that God had given Cromwell by bringing the downfall of the Pope by seizing the wealth of the Americas.[36] This was neither a new nor isolated view in America at the time, for in 1646 it was commonly believed amongst the colonial community in Boston that not only were the Americas seen as the source of the Pope's power but also that New England was destined to play a role in the downfall of the Papacy; one inhabitant wrote there would be there 'a rendezvous for our deare English friends when they shall make their voyages to the West Indies; to dry up that Euphrates.'[37] Another Puritan worthy who had Cromwell's attention during the early months of 1654 was Roger Williams, also a New England minister, who was in England that year and who was also an acquaintance of Cotton. Williams later recounted that he had held many private conversations with Cromwell whilst in England and when, on his return to New England, he heard the news that the Lord Protector had sent a fleet to the West Indies he wrote with glee that it was in accordance with Cotton's interpretation of the prophecy and that he had discussed such an action with the Lord Protector before leaving England.[38] Another minister who was a frequent confidant and spiritual adviser to Cromwell was Hugh Peter, who in 1647 referred to the West Indies as the Euphrates when he urged the squabbling English gentry they would be better bestowing their time 'upon the West Indies, to which we have been so often called, and would soon make an end of Europe's troubles by drying up that Euphrates'.[39]

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[34] Firth (ed.), *Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.207.

[35] John Cotton, *The powring out of the seven vials* (London:1642); Susan Hardman Moore, *William Hooke [Hook] (1600/01–1678), ODNB*; Francis J. Bremer, *John Cotton (1585–1652), ODNB.*

Certainly Cromwell was exposed to numerous ministers whom he evidently respected who espoused the view that not only was South America the source of wealth that supported the Papacy, but also that it was God's will that it be forcibly taken from the Spanish and that the English were to be God's instrument in this. He corresponded with and received advice from numerous ministers who believed that it was God's will, as manifested in Revelations, for the Euphrates to dry up in the West Indies and most certainly their influence made an impact on the Lord Protector, as he mulled over what England was to do on the world stage after the end of the Dutch War. He was therefore already aware of the prophecy and its meaning when he came into contact with Thomas Gage, an ex-Dominican friar who had lived and travelled extensively in South America during the 1620s and 1630s. Gage had become disillusioned with the way that the Spanish church operated throughout the region and he returned to England prior to the outbreak of

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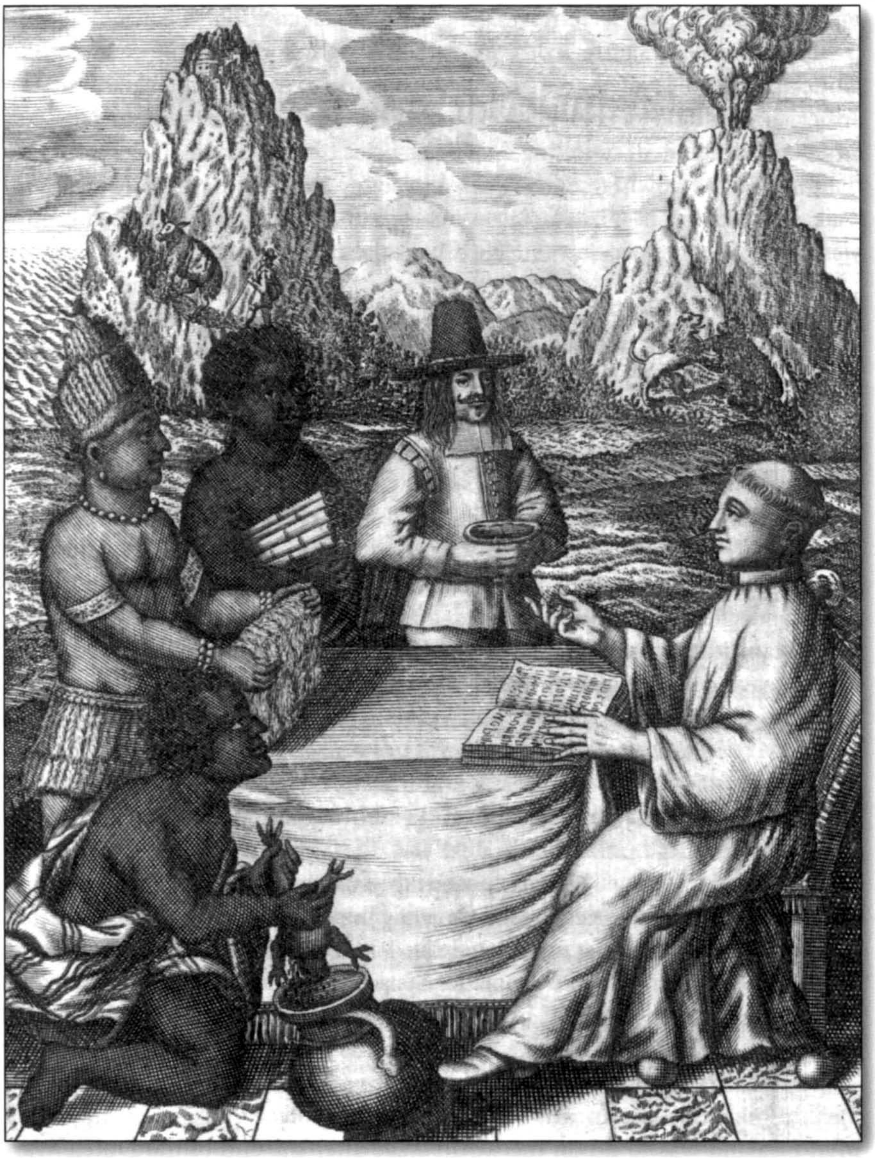
[36] Thomas Hutchinson, *A collection of original papers relative to the History of the colony of Massachusets-bay*, (Boston: 1769), p.236; Samuel Sewall, *Diary of Samuel Sewall, 1674–1729*, Vol. V - Fifth Series (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1878), p.437.

[37] Cotton, *Seven Vials*; Hutchinson, *Massachusets Papers*, p.220.

[38] Wait Still Winthrop et al., *The Winthrop papers*, Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society; ser. 4, v. 6, 7; ser. 5, v. 1, 8; ser. 6, v. 3, 5, (Boston: The Massachusetts Historical Society, 1863), pp.290–291.

[39] Hugh Peter, 'A Word for the Army', *Harleian Miscellany*, 1947, Vol. 6, p.72.



Native Americans offer gifts to Thomas Gage c.1693. Extract from *The English-American his Travail by Sea and Land*. (Johann Herbordt Kloss, The John Carter Brown Library, Providence. D693 G133n)

the English Civil War, converted to Protestantism and became a preacher in Kent. In 1648 he published a narrative of his experiences in South America entitled *The English-American his travail by sea and land: or, A new survey of the West-India's*. He dedicated the book to Sir Thomas Fairfax, to whom he stated the purpose of the book was to 'impart what I there saw and knew to the use and benefit of my English countrymen'. In the book he specifically urged that England should attack the Spanish West Indies to exploit the wealth of that area for its own benefit.[40]

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[40] T. Gage, *The English-American his travail by sea and land: or, A new survey of the West-India's* (London: R.Cotes, 1648).

The book was obviously brought to the attention of Cromwell, because at some point in 1654 Thomas Gage was requested to submit an outline plan of how such a conquest of the Spanish America could be undertaken. Full of venom towards the Spanish, Gage's subsequent report showed all the prejudices and bigotry that many Englishmen felt towards the Spanish and to which Cromwell himself was not immune. He wrote there were 'no people more sinfull then the Spaniards in America ... who in general sinne, and hide not their sinne ... but sinne publikely, sinne like beasts uncontrowledly: therefore their sinnes will betray them and fight against them, if ever any nation shall oppose them.' He added that:

> None in conscience may better attempt such an expulsion of the Spaniards from those parts, then the English, who have been often expulsed [*sic*] by them from our plantations; as from St. Christopher, St. Martin's, from Providence, alias St. Catharine's, and from Tortugas, where the English were unhumanly and most barbarously treated by the Spaniards ... The Spaniards cannot oppose much, being a lazy, sinfull people, feeding like beasts upon their lusts, and upon the fat of the land, and never trained up to warres.[41]

Gage's opinions undoubtedly struck a chord with Cromwell as it reinforced his own prejudices and stereotypes of the Spanish, whilst Gage's obvious first-hand knowledge of the region must have been of great help to the Lord Protector as he sought to comprehend how God's will could be achieved there. Gage, however, oversimplified the task of conquering such a vast area and downplayed the resilience that the Spaniards would show to protect their possessions, and certainly Cromwell was gullible in believing all the claims of the renegade cleric. Gage was later afforded the honour of being appointed chaplain in Venables' own regiment when it departed England, and this surely illustrates the respect that Cromwell and the expedition held for him.

Another religious aspect that influenced English decision making in favour of an anti-Spanish foreign policy was the fear of the dreaded Spanish Inquisition and how it was reportedly used against Englishmen in Spanish territories that were not Catholic. It was widely believed in England at the time that Spain openly persecuted English Protestants residing in Spain and that trade was only open to Catholics. Cromwell famously commented that, 'We cannot suffer our people to go there and be idolaters'.[42] It was thought that an aggressive and successful anti-Spanish policy would force Spain into granting greater liberties to Englishmen who visited its territories. Despite this claim, however, there is plenty of evidence to demonstrate that the English who traded with Spain were not singled out for persecution nor denied liberty of conscience to the extent believed at home. As a result of the 1630 treaty the Spanish had allowed temporary English residents, living in lodging houses, to practise their religion in peace, as long as they gave no offence to Catholics outside of their lodgings, and Spanish records show that for the most part the dreaded Inquisition left these residents alone. As many English traders were transient anyway, this hardly demonstrates repression on behalf of the Spanish authorities. However it is true that those permanent English residents who had their own properties and who intended to reside in Spain long term were expected to live as Catholics, or at least give the outward appearance that they did. During the first half of the seventeenth century the Spanish authorities in many instances commended the English on their conduct and their efforts to avoid creating offence to their Catholic hosts without flaunting their Protestant beliefs. In fact Spanish records of the time show little evidence of the Inquisition detaining Englishmen, though there are many instances of the English apparently freely converting to Catholicism amongst the extant records of the Inquisition. Even then it seems the Spanish frequently turned a blind eye to Englishmen who lived openly as Protestants, and it was only in times of conflict between England and Spain that arrests were made, as in the case of one merchant living in Malaga since at least 1648 as a known Protestant, but it was only in 1658 that he was arrested and tried by the Inquisition. A petition submitted to Parliament in 1659 by a group of merchants that traded with Spain corroborated this when they stated that Moors, Jews nor Protestants were 'not at all Questioned' by the Inquisition and for those that were questioned it was on account of 'his mis-behaviour, and for the publique scandal he gave, and not for being a Protestant'.[43] Whilst without doubt the Spanish did restrict the English from practising their faith in Spain (as the English did with Catholics residing in England) it cannot be said they were zealous or overly aggressive in their attempts to control them and many, probably most, Englishmen lived in Spain free from persecution. The widely held belief that the English were constantly harassed for their religious beliefs whilst residing in Spain cannot be substantiated and have been overly exaggerated even though it was widely believed at the time and certainly asserted some influence in Cromwell's mind when formulating his policy.[44]

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[41] Thomas Birch (ed.), *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. 3 (London: Fletcher Gyles, 1742), pp.59–61.

[42] Firth (ed.), *Clarke Papers, Vol. 3*, pp.207–208.

Another fallacy widely believed by the English at the time was that the English were entirely precluded from trade with Spain and its empire in America. In September 1655, when war between England and Spain seemed inevitable, a petition was sent from a select group of merchants in the City of London to the Lord Protector seeking his assurance that hostilities could be avoided. These merchants traded extensively with Spain and they were naturally concerned that war would seriously impact their trade and perhaps even lead to their economic ruin, or as they themselves described it, they 'will be utterly undone, and ruinated'.[45] Given Cromwell's argument that the government of Spain severely restricted English trade with the realm, this frantic appeal by some of the City's most influential merchants to avoid economic catastrophe seems odd. If trade with Spain was so severely restricted how could so many merchants be so exposed to ruin if war was to disrupt it? But the truth of the matter is that England in the mid seventeenth century had a significant amount of trade and commercial dealings with Spain, not just with the Iberian peninsula but also with the Spanish Netherlands, and perhaps incredibly given Cromwell's rhetoric to the contrary, with South America as well. In fact Spain was one of England's largest trading partners although it is impossible to quantify the value of this two way trade due to a lack of existing commercial records, though one merchant believed the war lost England three million pounds Sterling of trade annually.[46]

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[43] TT, Richard Baker, *The marchants humble petition and remonstrance to his late Highnesse*, 1659, p.12.

[44] Alastair MacFadyen, 'Anglo-Spanish Relations, 1625–1660', PhD Thesis, Liverpool University, 1967, pp.18–21, 219–220.

[45] Thomas Birch (ed.), *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. 4 (London: Fletcher Gyles, 1742), pp.44–45.

Historically the English had exported significant quantities of worsted fabrics to Spain each year, especially from the West Country through the port of Bristol. Lead, tin, wax, wheat, butter and cheese were also exported in large quantities, as were manufactured goods by the ship load. English fishermen who fished the bountiful seas off Newfoundland sold perhaps as much as three quarters of their catch to the Spanish, which was believed to be worth half a million pounds Sterling per annum to the English in 1655.[47] English broadcloth and manufactured goods were also exported to the Spanish Netherlands, though not in the same quantities as in the previous century, but still in significant enough amounts to make it a lucrative trade. The English in turn purchased oil, wine, dried fruit, iron ore and Spanish wool from Spain, especially the extra-fine merino wool that was in much demand to make clothes for England's wealthiest individuals.[48] In addition to this substantial trade there was one commodity that the Spanish had which the English prized above all else, and that was bullion. The cash economies of the seventeenth century demanded bullion, mainly silver but gold also, to provide the cash needed to circulate within their economies, and Spain, possessing the silver mines of South America, was shipping fleetloads of silver to Europe each year; more than anything else the English coveted this bullion that the Spanish had to trade. As the merchants' petition explained to Cromwell, the value of their exports far exceeded that of the imports, and the trade surplus was returned to England in the form of silver which was minted into coins and which then flowed into both the economy and the coffers of the merchants. Even though the Spanish government prohibited the export of bullion from Spain they were powerless to stop it as long as Spain needed to import the commodities that could only be provided by their northern European neighbours. Ingenious methods were established to smuggle the bullion out of Spain by both the English and Dutch under the very eyes of the Spanish authorities, who were impotent to stop it.[49] The Spanish saw the English merchants as their most reliable trading partners, helped by almost half a century of peace between the two nations, unlike the French with whom they were continually at war, and the Dutch towards whom they were also equally hostile. In fact so necessary was the English trade to Spain that in 1645 the English merchants in the country were able to negotiate additional favourable trading concessions with the Spanish Crown that gave them even greater advantage over their other trading rivals.[50] Far from being restricted in their trade with Spain the English were benefiting from advantageous trading terms and lax government enforcement of other trade policies and the English merchants were making fortunes in return. No wonder the merchants were scared that war would disrupt their lucrative dealings with Spain.

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[46] TT, *The marchants humble petition and remonstrance to his late Highnesse*, 1659, pp. 1, 14.

[47] MacFadyen, 'Spanish Relations', pp.70,71,73; TT, *The marchants humble petition and remonstrance to his late Highnesse*, 1659.

[48] MacFadyen, 'Spanish Relations', p.73.

[49] MacFadyen, 'Spanish Relations', pp.81–82.

But the English benefited much more in their commercial dealings with Spain than merely exporting more than they imported. The massive fishing fleets the English had established in part as a result of their Spanish exports were a spur to the nation's shipbuilding industry as the shipyards expanded to build the vessels needed for this rapidly growing fishing fleet, but they could also build both merchant ships and naval vessels when required. The men that crewed these fishing boats provided a large and experienced body of seamen that could just as easily be employed by the State in the navy. The English merchant marine which had expanded rapidly after the peace of 1630 increased the nation's capacity to transport goods for profit by sea, either for itself or for other nations. Spain lacked the capacity to create a significant merchant marine of its own and so relied upon leasing or chartering foreign vessels for many of its commercial needs in Europe. Again poor relations with the Dutch provided the English with the opportunity to develop shipping routes for the Spanish, mainly between Spain and the Spanish Netherlands which were entirely dependent on imports from Spain for all its needs. Flexing their muscle, the English in the 1630s were able to ensure that such exports from Spain were transhipped through English ports, mainly Dover. When these cargoes were landed import duty was levied on them, providing revenue for the Exchequer as well as jobs for the local inhabitants, which had developed into a hugely profitable trade for the English. The dislocation of the English Civil War and the peace of 1648 between Spain and the Dutch Republic certainly dented this practice, and variants of the initial transhipment scheme were discussed at various times afterwards in an attempt to re-establish the trade, which again further illustrates the benefit of Spanish trade to England, contrary to popular opinion at the time.[51]

The Spanish lack of a merchant marine impacted Spain's ability to provide shipping to and from its South American colonies, and once again the English were in a position to capitalise, which they did, again contrary to popular opinion. On numerous occasions during the 1640s English ships were hired to join the annual armadas sent from Spain to the New World carrying all the imports that the colonies needed and to ship back the wealth extracted from the silver and gold mines. Despite a prohibition on using foreign ships and crews the Spanish needs were so acute that officials turned a blind eye to the English and other foreigners that sailed from Spain with the armadas. Not only did these English vessels make money from being leased but they were also able to ship contraband trade goods for sale in the colonies, while they could also acquire commodities there such as sugar and tobacco which they brought back to England to sell. All ships trading with South America were required to return directly to Spain and not offload their cargoes anywhere else, but there were examples of English ships leaving the Caribbean and heading directly to England to sell their cargo. Undoubtedly English involvement with trade with South America was profitable but it was still on a reasonably small scale and England was still barred from trading directly. But there were opportunities to circumvent these prohibitions. Some English merchants, resident in Spain for long enough, were able to acquire naturalisation which allowed them to legally trade with the colonies and some certainly did.[52] Further evidence that the English were involved with trade within South America is demonstrated by the fact that in early 1656 when a vessel was seized by the English fleet off Colombia, it was actually commanded by an Englishman, a late resident of Seville.[53]

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[50] MacFadyen, 'Spanish Relations', p.84; Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 4, p.44.

[51] MacFadyen, 'Spanish Relations', p.112; Maurice Ashley, *Financial and Commercial Policy under the Cromwellian Protectorate* (London: Frank Cass & Co Ltd, 1962), p.151.

Another way that the English were able to trade with South America was through their relationship with Portugal. The Portuguese officially barred other nationalities trading directly with Brazil, but a lack of shipping and trained crews led to the necessity of sourcing vessels where they could and once again the English were ideally positioned to take advantage. With English vessels being allowed to tacitly sail to Brazil, opportunities for trade, legal and illegal, presented themselves and Brazil became a conduit for small-scale English trade with the continent. Again, as with Spain, the English became an essential component in the trade and this brought opportunity for further profit. Under the terms of the peace treaty with Portugal in 1654 the English were afforded the right to trade directly with Brazil, opening up even greater opportunities for English merchants in the Americas, but this also led to the seemingly logical belief that if one Iberian nation was able to open its colonies to English trade it was only natural for the English to expect the others to do the same, and so the demand for easier access to the Spanish trade grew.[54]

An indication of how successful the English were with trading with South America can been seen in the frequent instructions that the Spanish ambassador to England received in the early 1650s, to request the English government put a stop to it, as it contravened the 1630 peace treaty.[55] Further proof that the English were able to trade with South America, one way or another, is evidenced by the number of English sea captains with intimate knowledge of the region who played a role in the expedition. In April 1654 the Council of State sought out two of them to provide first-hand details of Spanish capabilities and defences there, whilst Vice admiral Goodsonn admitted to having lived in Cartagena for a number of years. When the English fleet arrived in Barbados it retained the services of some English guides who had spent time recently in Hispaniola. Whilst the numbers of English with personal knowledge of the region based on their previous trading experiences ought not to be exaggerated, it is evident that there were plenty of them available, which suggests that the English were not entirely excluded from the trade of the West Indies.

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[52] MacFadyen, 'Spanish Relations', pp.94, 92,91; TT, *The marchants humble petition and remonstrance to his late Highnesse*, 1659, p.11.

[53] Thomas Birch (ed.), *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. 5 (London: Fletcher Gyles, 1742), p.151.

[54] MacFadyen, 'Spanish Relations', pp.99–106.

[55] MacFadyen, 'Spanish Relations', pp.89–90 and n. 61, 245.

Whilst it is certainly true that for the most part English trade was barred from any direct, or legal, activity with the Spanish colonies of South America, trade did exist, albeit on a much smaller scale than the English demanded. But perhaps the most significant aspect of English commercial involvement with South America was not its limited physical involvement with the carrying trade but by English capital facilitating legal Spanish trade. It is perhaps telling that in 1655, when Spain seized English property as a result of the embargo placed upon the English as a consequence of the attack in the West Indies, the majority of the property seized was Spanish debt to English creditors. In Malaga alone, a major centre of trade to the West Indies, the Spanish authorities seized in 1655 only 152,768 *reals* of movable property from English merchants there but a staggering 1,128,766 *reals* in debt, owed by their merchants to the English.[56] It is impossible to establish how much credit English financiers had provided to Spanish merchants to conduct their colonial trade, but one merchant claimed the total amount of English trade seized by the Spanish embargo was valued to be at least 800,000*l*.[57] English involvement in the West Indies trade, hard and restrictive as it was, paled into insignificance compared to English involvement in providing credit to the Spanish traders themselves to enable them to continue their own involvement in the trade. Whilst some influential English might have felt aggrieved at the limited trading opportunities with Spain, and demanded greater access, it is certainly not the case that they were precluded from it entirely. No wonder the City merchants and financiers feared the consequences of the outbreak of war for they had a lot to lose.

The English also maintained a sense of grievance with Spain since the end of the war of 1625–1630, which helped foster feelings of hostility between the two nations and which also influenced Cromwell's desire for both an anti-Spanish policy and an aggressive approach in the West Indies. As Thurloe explained in a memorandum concerning English foreign affairs under Cromwell, prepared in 1660 for Charles II after the Restoration, despite the first article of the peace treaty of 1630 between the two nations 'whereby it is agreed, that there should be a peace, amity and friendship between the two kings and their respective subjects in all parts of the world, as well in Europe as elsewhere', the Spanish were overtly hostile to the English in the West Indies. For, as he further explained, 'in contravention of this article, the English were treated by the Spaniards as enemies, wherever they were met in America'. As such, a key demand of the English foreign policy was to gain 'satisfaction' for such hostility and that a 'good foundation of friendship lay'd in those parts for the future between their respective subjects'.[58] Thurloe concluded his synopsis by reiterating the English opinion of the time that peace in the West Indies with Spain was 'already broken by the Spanyard contrary to the former treatyes', and so the English attack was merely a reprisal for previous wrongs committed upon it.[59] This line of reasoning was also explained to Robert Venables by Cromwell himself when he was approached to be the commander of the expedition and was told 'That either there was Peace with the Spaniards in the West Indies, or not. If Peace, they had Violated it, and to seek reparation was Just. If we had no Peace, then was there nothing acted against Articles with Spain.'[60] When Cromwell sought to justify his attack in the West Indies after 1655 he was able to produce copious examples of how English merchants and colonists had been attacked and mistreated by the Spanish since the signing of this treaty. And so it was natural that the English looked towards the Americas as somewhere to seek revenge, rather than in Europe, and for this Cromwell had much precedent that would have reinforced his views that his projected expedition ought to focus there and not closer to home.

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[56] MacFadyen, 'Spanish Relations', p.87.

[57] TT, *The marchants humble petition and remonstrance to his late Highnesse*, 1659, p.5.

The suggestion of attacking the Spanish in the West Indies was not a new one when it was considered by the English state in 1654. The first English-organised expedition to the New World has been led by the Italian John Cabot when he discovered Newfoundland in 1497. By 1569 John Hawkins had demonstrated the value of trade with the Caribbean after three successful piratical voyages which had led him into conflict with the Spanish on numerous occasions. His protégé and cousin Francis Drake continued the exploration and traded extensively across South America, and became the first Englishman to circumnavigate the Earth on his return to England in 1580, but he made no effort to colonise any of the territories he visited. It was Walter Raleigh who first proposed that the English settle in the New World rather than just make passing visits to trade and plunder before returning home, and he sponsored the failed Roanoke colony in modern-day North Carolina in 1585. Hawkins, Drake and Raleigh formed an awareness amongst the English nation of the possibilities that the New World offered as their exploits were told and retold. Books soon appeared that described the exotic lands and exaggerated their wealth but which also encouraged settlement and trade. The writings of Richard Hakluyt, Raleigh and Sir Humphrey Gilbert were the bestsellers in their day and all educated gentlemen of the early seventeenth century would have read them and been inspired by the potential that these faraway lands seemed to offer England, and no doubt they would have been read by Cromwell in his younger years. On the whole these writings encouraged peaceful occupation of the vast expanse of the Americas, but by the second decade of the seventeenth century there were groups of English merchants and politicians who began lobbying for an altogether more aggressive policy against Spain in the West Indies, particularly after the Spanish defeat in 1620 of the Protestant Frederick V, King of Bohemia and Elector of the Palatinate, at the Battle of the White Mountain during the Thirty Years' War. Protestant England was outraged by Frederick's usurpation, which was all the more personal for the English as Frederick's wife, Elizabeth, was the daughter of the English King, James I.[61]

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[58] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 1, p.760. See John Rushworth, *Historical Collections of Private Passages of State*, Vol. 3 (London: 1659), pp.90–99 for the full peace treaty.

[59] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 1, p.761.

[60] Sir Charles Harding Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables, with an appendix of papers relating to the expedition to the West Indies and the conquest of Jamaica, 1654–1655* (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1900), p.3.

James I had pursued a pro-Spanish foreign policy ever since he had negotiated the end of Queen Elizabeth's war against Spain in 1603, a war brought on in no small part by the execution of his mother, Mary Queen of Scots. This policy was much resented by leading Protestants in England and brought James into conflict with Parliament in 1614, and opposition to James increased after 1616 when he commenced negotiations with Spain to marry his son and heir, Charles, to the Spanish Infanta Maria. The prospect of a marriage alliance between the monarchs of both countries sent shockwaves across Protestant England and this fear was fuelled by the prospect that Charles might even convert to Catholicism to obtain the Pope's blessing for the marriage. James was forced into summoning Parliament in 1621 to raise funds to assist his son-in-law in regaining his Bohemian throne, but Parliament, with the backing of merchants in the City of London, took the opportunity to attack his pro-Spanish policy, and for the first time proposed a State-sponsored retaliatory attack upon Spain in the West Indies. Originally proposed as a diversionary attack against the Spanish to divert resources from Europe and so help Frederick regain his throne, it also had the added advantage of the potential of securing the wealth of the King of Spain for the benefit of England. It would also be cheaper than a continental war, and as John Pym argued at the time, success in the West Indies could finance a war with Spain in Europe. Sir Nathaniel Rich, cousin of Robert Rich, 2nd Earl of Warwick, proposed a West India Company to exploit the resources that could be captured, and Sir George Goring, later Earl of Norwich, even called for a declaration of war with Spain.[62] James, outraged by these suggestions, promptly dissolved Parliament in early 1622 by which he brought an end to these first formal discussions of an attack in the West Indies, but the thought had been placed in the minds of many, and would not go away so easily.

The Earl of Warwick sat at the head of the wealthy and influential Rich family, pioneers of American colonisation and consummate privateers. Warwick himself was a significant investor in the Virginia Company and its offshoot the Somers Island Company, which controlled the Bermuda colony as well as the Providence Island Company. Throughout his career his commercial interests always brought him into conflict with the Spanish in the West Indies and it was these interests that brought him into regular contact with other colonial investors such as Lord Saye and Sele, Lord Brooke, Oliver St. John and John Pym. He constantly opposed the Crown during the tussles with Parliament after 1621 and opposed the pro-Spanish foreign policy and Charles I's support of Arminianism and Archbishop Laud, whilst he also refused to pay the imposts and Ship Money that Charles attempted to levy. As a result the individuals in opposition to the King began to coalesce around him and the other aristocratic grandees during the 1630s. In 1642 Warwick was appointed Lord High Admiral and was instrumental in getting the navy to declare for Parliament that same year. He was an intimate of Oliver Cromwell and in 1657 carried the Sword of State at the Lord Protector's second inauguration, whilst the same year his grandson and heir, Robert Rich, married Cromwell's daughter Francis.[63] Whilst Warwick played no part in the attack on the West Indies in 1655 it was something that he had called for in the past and would no doubt have been happy to support, whilst his personal connection with Cromwell must surely have had some influence on the latter's decision to send the expedition there; so undoubtedly Warwick and his family were able to exert considerable influence over Cromwell during the period leading up to the decision to attack the West Indies.

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[61] G.M.D. Howat, *Stuart and Cromwellian Foreign Policy* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1974), pp.25–39.

[62] Robert Brenner, *Merchants and revolution commercial change, political conflict, and London's overseas traders, 1550–1653* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp.249–252.

The idea of an attack upon the Spanish West Indies was again mooted when a new Parliament was summoned in 1624. This time the parliamentary opposition was in broad agreement with Prince Charles and his favourite the Duke of Buckingham, who both seemed to be warming to an anti-Spanish policy after their failed efforts to obtain Charles' marriage to the Infanta had ended in the humiliation of rejection. Before Parliament even met, Sir Charles Conway, the King's Secretary of State, had suggested that King James ought to 'waste the king of Spain's shipping upon his coast, interrupt the returns of his plate', whilst a joint Anglo-Dutch fleet should 'supplant him [Spain] in the West Indies' as a diversion to an attack in Europe to help Frederick regain his throne.[64] The following year, with Charles now king, Sir John Coke sought to revive Conway's proposal when he wrote that, in words eerily similar to Cromwell's own instructions to his Commissioners in charge of his attack, a private force should be sent 'to intercept his plate fleets, to invade his countries, to fortify and plant there, and to establish government, confederacy, and trade'.[65] Once again neither proposal materialised and events turned upon a different course when Buckingham botched an attack upon the Spanish at Cadiz later in the year, but it further demonstrates that individuals at the heart of English government were prepared to countenance an unprovoked attack of pure self-interest upon the Spanish in the Americas, and thereby created precedent for later governments.

The suggestion that a West India Company be established was raised in Parliament again April 1626 as a means of funding a private war against the Spanish without resorting to yet more taxation. Crucially for the opposition in Parliament it was proposed to be a private undertaking and so the King's involvement, and interference, would be negligible.[66] A bill was presented to Parliament on 13 April to this effect in support of which Sir Benjamin Rudyerd, a poet and later co-founder of the Providence Company along with Warwick, commented that 'this is noble and profitable enterprise ... Spain is week and barren ... His money from the West Indies barely enables him all his enterprises, and being taken from him he will soon be brought down.' Sir Nathaniel Rich, just one of many supporters of the proposal, helpfully suggested that Bermuda, the colony he and Warwick were heavily invested in, could be used as a base for privateers operating under the company.[67] But once again nothing eventuated for at the same time the House of Commons began impeachment proceedings against the Duke of Buckingham, much to the King's anger, and he subsequently dissolved Parliament before the bill could be passed. The matter was raised again in the next Parliament, in June 1628, but other more pressing matters occupied the minds of the Parliamentarians and once again the long hoped for company never materialised. However the news that the Dutchman Piet Heyn had captured a large part of the Spanish plate fleet, worth an estimated 1,200,000*l*, would have done much to encourage proponents of the company that it was a prize worth striving for. Charles soon dissolved Parliament and ruled without one for the next 11 years, but even without the Parliamentarian stage upon which to act out their designs for the conquest of the West Indies, the colonial sponsors and chief opposition to the King continued their machinations, this time with private attempts to bring down the Spanish in the Caribbean, notably in the form of the Providence Island Company.

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[63] Sean Kelsey, *Robert Rich, Second Earl of Warwick (1587–1658), ODNB.*

[64] Quoted in Brenner, *Merchants & Revolution*, p.253.

[65] The National Archives, SP16/1/59, Propositions [in the hand-writing of Sir John Coke] for incorporating a company for defence and protection of the west Indies, and establishing a trade to the same; and for fitting out a fleet to attack the Spanish settlements, 1625.

The Providence Island Company was established in 1629 to provide a God-fearing community of settlers on a small island off the coast off Nicaragua, where they could worship without any of the restraints imposed upon the Puritans in England whilst also being a base for trade and privateering in the West Indies. Headed by the Earl of Warwick, the company's other investors read a like a roll call of opponents to Charles I. Naturally Sir Nathaniel Rich was foremost in the venture as was Henry Rich, Earl of Holland and Warwick's brother, and William Fiennes, Viscount Saye and Sele. Other shareholders were Lord Brooke, John (later Lord) Robartes, Sir Thomas Barrington, John Pym, Oliver St. John and John Hampden, all of whom were to play major roles during the Civil War and nearly all of whom had either blood or marriage ties to Oliver Cromwell. The influence of these individuals on the events that preceded the English Civil War cannot be overemphasised and their influence, and that of the company they established, was still discernible in the lead-up to Cromwell's attack upon the Spanish.[68]

The colony itself was ultimately a failure, with disease and starvation decimating the ranks of the English settlers, and it was eventually overrun by the Spanish in May 1641. Despite that it became a symbol to the English of what might be achieved in the Americas. That it had lasted so long in the heart if the Spanish empire was surely a sign of God's providence and after it was overrun there was a feeling that it needed to be avenged. The company had demonstrated that it was possible to fund privateering ventures to attack Spanish interests in the West Indies as the two voyages made by William Jackson had proved, and the meagre returns from these voyages did little to dampen enthusiasm for future attempts.[69] Although most of the original shareholders and opponents of Charles I had died by the time Cromwell planned his attack in 1654, the influence of the company remained strong and must surely have had some bearing on his decisions. Cromwell himself was not involved with the company but he certainly knew all of the main shareholders personally and would have heard stories of the island in more peaceful times. In 1643 he was appointed to the Parliamentarian Commission for Plantations where his fellow commissioners included the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Manchester (formally Lord Mandeville), and Lord Say and Sele as well as John Pym, all of whom invested in the company and through his work on the commission Cromwell would have learnt something of the West Indies, colonies, planting and privateering.[70] Later, during the Protectorate, the influence of the company remained strong within the government. Colonel Anthony Rous was a member of Cromwell's Council of State and many of his family members served with distinction with the company; one was even captured by the Spanish, and met the Dominican friar Thomas Gage during his imprisonment. Nathanial Fiennes, son of Viscount Say and Sele, acted as confidant to Oliver Cromwell and is believed to have written the *Manifesto* in October 1655 which justified the war with Spain. William Jessop, formally the company secretary, was later employed as a clerk by the Council of State. Colonel Andrew Carter, who commanded a regiment of foot in Venables' army during the expedition, had previously served the Provident Island Company in various roles in the colony and acted in 1642 as governor on the island.[71] A relative of Sir Thomas Barrington also served as an officer in Venables' army; he was to leave a detailed account of the expedition and served in Jamaica until his death in January 1660.[72] Even during the expedition the influence of the Provident Island Company was still to be seen. At Jamaica, when the Spanish came to seek terms of surrender, one eyewitness was to write that 'Gennerall Venabeles [*sic*] propounding to them the same Composichons that they gave our English upon Providence, which was all to go off from the Island each with a suit of clothes on his back', and so Venables was certainly aware of the legacy of Providence Island.[73] In October 1655 Cromwell wrote to Major General Fortescue, who was then commanding in Jamaica, 'we could heartily wish that the Island of Providence were in our hands again, believing that it lies so advantageously in reference to the Main and especially for the hindrance of the Peru trade and Cartagena [*sic*]'.[74] Cromwell was connected politically, as well as through marriage, to many of the prime instigators of English colonial expansion of the era and these connections would have created an awareness of advantages and benefits of an official anti-Spanish policy in America.

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[66] TNA, SP16/24/48, April 6 1626. Whitehall. Sir Benjamin Rudyerd to [Sir Francis Nethersole], 1626.

[67] Quoted in Brenner, *Merchants & Revolution*, pp.259–260.

[68] See Arthur Percival Newton, *The Colonising Activities of the English Puritans: The Last Phase of the Elizabethan Struggle* (Newhaven: Yale University Press, 1914), and Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Providence Island, 1630–1641: The Other Puritan Colony* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), for a detailed history of both the Provident Island Company and the colony.

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[69] Vincent Todd Harlow (ed.), *The Voyages of Captain William Jackson*, Camden Society Publications, 3rd Series, 1924).

[70] Charles A. Andrews, *British committees, commissions, and councils of trade and plantations, 1622-1675*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1908), p.21.

[71] Newton, *Colonising Activities*, pp.229, 257.

[72] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), (London: 1879), reprint, part 2, pp.571–575.

[73] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.164.

Other influences also contributed to reinforcing the English belief that an aggressive policy in the Americas would be beneficial to themselves. One such argument given to support the benefit of gaining additional colonies in the West Indies was that they would provide a dumping ground for undesirables from Ireland and Scotland. Some Scottish prisoners captured at Dunbar in 1650 had been previously sent to New England in Ayscue's fleet and as many as 130 were offloaded in Barbados and so this was already a tested arrangement.[75] In April 1654 the Council discussed the need to transport 8,000–10,000 malcontents a year from Scotland without which they feared they would be unable to pacify the country, although predictably Lambert did not believe a new West Indian colony would prove to be a suitable vent for the 'troublesome people in England, Ireland or Scotland', and that more suitable arrangements could be found to deal with troublemakers at home.[76] In this, as in many aspects of the undertaking, Lambert was to be proved correct, for even after Jamaica was occupied the government made no concerted effort to transport undesirables from Britain, though it was considered at different times.

These fears of the Spanish and the ingrained loathing that many in England felt towards them were only aggravated by the terms of the two peace treaties that were signed between both nations in 1603 and 1630, which both dodged the question of English access to the West Indies. Both treaties omitted any reference whatsoever to the Spanish colonies, and regarding commercial arrangements ambiguously stated that trade was to be resumed on the same terms as before the outbreak of the war. To the Spanish this inexact statement meant that the English were prohibited totally from trading with South America, as they had claimed since 1493. The English could, and frequently did, claim that as these treaties excluded by name the Spanish colonies they were therefore excluded from the terms of the treaty. They could thus claim that as there was no prohibition clause of trade with the colonies they were naturally open for trade, but at the same time it could also be claimed that without specific mention that the treaties brought about the cessation of hostilities in the South America then a state of war, technically at least, was still in effect beyond the imaginary line. These ambiguities were to lead directly to confusion as to the true status of English–Spanish relations as the English Protectorate considered options for an attack in the West Indies. In fact even the 1670 treaty that ended the Anglo-Spanish War still would not directly acknowledge the right for the English to trade with or occupy territory in South America.[77]

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[74] Thomas Carlyle (ed.), *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, Vol. 2 (London: Methuen & Co, 1904), p.477.

[75] Mary Anne Everett Green (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1650* (London: Longmans & Co, 1876), pp.340, 397; Nicholas Darnell Davis, *The Cavaliers & Roundheads of Barbados, 1650-1652*, (Georgetown, British Guiana: Argosy Press, 1887), pp.226–227.

[76] Firth (ed.), *Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, pp.205, 208.

To the Spanish their claim to holding exclusive possession of the New World was inviolate and based upon the terms of the Papal Bull of 1493, although they accepted Portugal's right to ownership of Brazil. As such they saw any encroachment by other European powers into their sphere of influence as illegal and that they were justified in protecting the integrity of the territory through any laws they saw fit, including the use of force. Despite this, by the early seventeenth century the Spanish lacked the resources to rigorously enforce their rights and consequently the European powers were able to establish small colonies in peripheral locations unoccupied by the Spanish and so effectively abandoned by them. Spanish attempts at enforcing their territorial sovereignty were limited to attacks upon foreign merchants at sea with only the occasional attacks upon settlements such as St. Christopher, Tortuga and Providence Island to clear the unwanted foreigners from them. Nevertheless, Spain never relinquished its right to ownership to any territory in the New World in any formal communication from the Spanish government or in any treaty with competing nations. By doing so the Spanish continually claimed that any attempts by themselves to enforce their sovereignty were a lawful response to other nations' unlawful encroachment into their territory. Therefore, the incidents of attacking and seizing English shipping in the New World, which the English saw as unprovoked acts of violence against them, in violation to the treaties of 1603 and 1630, the Spanish saw as legitimate acts of policing their own sovereignty. When the Spanish reoccupied Providence Island, the English claimed it was naked aggression whilst the Spanish claimed it as self-defence as a result of an invasion of their territory. Inevitably this led to escalation, especially from the English, who saw attacks upon Spanish shipping as a retaliation for the unprovoked attacks upon their peaceful and law-abiding traders. As with many aspects of international relations it was a matter of perspective and how one nation responded as based on their perceived national interest at the time. But on the whole when the Spanish did enforce their sovereignty and English nationals were detained they were, by and large, well-treated by the standards of the day until such time as they released. This lack of reference to America in either peace treaty was seen by many English as a justification for any aggressive actions that chose to make against Spain.

Interestingly there was seemingly no discussion, or even concern, for the wellbeing of the native populations, and at no time was it ever argued that English actions were justified on the grounds of freeing the local enslaved peoples. In 1656 Bartolome de las Casas' book *The Tears of the Indians*, which described the many acts of genocide supposedly perpetrated by the Spanish in South America upon the local populace, was translated into English and printed in London with a foreword addressed to Oliver Cromwell. Yet it was not meant to justify the English attack as a means to end Spanish brutality, but more to galvanise anti-Spanish hostility amongst the war-weary English population. In the same vein Thomas Gage's *The English-American*, published in 1648 and reprinted in 1654, also documented Spanish atrocities and encouraged an English war of expansion but not for the benefit of the indigenous population.[78]

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[77] MacFadyen, 'Spanish Relations', p.16.

By the summer of 1654, when the decision on an anti-Spanish foreign policy had been made and approved of the Council of State, Cromwell genuinely believed he had made the right decision. After weighing up the options he had concluded that hostility towards Spain and reconciliation with France were in the best interests of the nation. Such a policy would help perpetuate the war between Spain and France, would distance the exiled Royalists from the French government, and provide him with oversight and influence over French attitudes towards the Huguenots. Such a policy seemed to be the manifestation of God's will in which England was to play a significant role in protecting European Protestants but which would also lead to the overthrow of the Papacy by bringing down its most important supporter, Spain. This policy would provide an opportunity to fulfil the long-held ambition of the English to attack the Spanish in the Americas and to deal the death blow to its economy by seizing the wealth of silver and gold mines of the continent.

Whilst the English were preparing for war with Spain in the West Indies they earnestly believed that the war would be restricted to the Americas and not spread to Europe. On the face of it this belief seems naive in the extreme but there is good reason to suppose that they were correct in this supposition. Historically English raids into the Caribbean during the sixteenth century had not precipitated war with Spain in Europe, although some were certainly as the result of war at home. Nor had English seizures of islands in the Caribbean and the establishment of colonies there in the first half of the seventeenth century led to war, even when the Spanish resorted to armed force to eject the English, as in the case of Providence Island in 1641. William Jackson's two extensive, and successful, privateering raids of 1639–1641 had barely elicited a complaint from the Spanish government. Certainly the Spanish sought reprisals in the West Indies when an opportunity arose but these were not deliberate acts of retaliation by the Spanish Crown and nor did they extend to European waters. Whilst the scale of Cromwell's undertaking was larger than previous incursions, as well as being state sponsored, it was essentially an amalgam of raid and colonisation, neither of which had led to war breaking out between the two in the past. When war did break out between England and Spain in 1625 it was for European political reasons and not as a result of the numerous English encroachments in the Caribbean.

With Spain at war with France it could ill afford a fight with England, no matter what the provocation. Despite commanding the wealth of the Americas, Spain's European wars had all but bankrupted it, and it relied on the ever more infrequent arrival of its plate fleets to pay creditors and so could not afford any interruption by a hostile English fleet off the coast of Spain. The Spanish, lacking a sizeable navy of their own, were reliant upon mainly hired Dutch vessels to protect their galleons and carry their trade, but it was not unheard of for English vessels to provide freighter solutions when needed. English vessels certainly carried trade goods of their own into Spanish ports and exports back to England, despite English claims that its merchants were precluded from involvement in Spanish trade. English imports from Spain alone were an estimated 150,000*l* per year in 1654, a massive sum that Spain could ill afford to lose. The vital battleground of the Spanish Netherlands was reliant upon supplies and reinforcements coming by sea from Spain, a route that of necessity transited through the English Channel and was already a haven for French privateers, eager to pick off slow-moving Spanish supply ships. Conflict with England in Europe would make this journey even more perilous to Spanish shipping, while any English blockade of the ports of Ostend or Nieuport would have catastrophic consequences for their forces fighting along the French border. The Spanish government was well aware of how vulnerable its maritime access was to the Spanish Netherlands and how easily it could be interrupted by the English should hostilities breakout between them, and this was always a moderating factor in its reactions to any perceived aggression in the West Indies.

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[78] Bartolome de las Casas, *The Tears of the Indians* (London: 1656); Gage, *The English-American*.

Certainly the English saw that they were in a position of strength. Spanish weakness in Europe would surely limit their response in Europe to an attack in the West Indies, it was believed, a belief confirmed in the notes of the Council meeting in April 1654 when it was discussed. It was then noted that notwithstanding an English attack in the Caribbean:

> it is possible, if not reasonable to expect that wee may have peace and trade in Europe, for his necesaitye of our trade will require it, but especially his interest in Flanders, which he hath no way either to releive with forces or monyes but through our Channell, which if he have warr in Europe he will certainly be debarred of.[79]

There were also some in Spain who thought the same.[80] This expectation was further reinforced by the initial Spanish reactions to the rumours that it was to be attacked by the two English fleets assembling in Portsmouth during the summer of 1654. Despite the Spanish ambassador Alonso de Cardenas hearing rumours as early June that the West Indies was the target, he could do nothing but fume and report back to Spain, for he was too wily a diplomat to let rumours affect his deliberations with the English. With no definitive confirmation he was forced to remain in England for a further year whilst attempting to negotiate an alliance with England, fearful that a change in the stance of his position, or worse still his departure from the country, would push England into military alliance with France. The Spanish position was so weak that he was necessitated to try to obtain a treaty with the English until all possible chance had faded.[81]

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[79] Firth (ed.), *Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.205.

[80] Venning, *Foreign Policy*, p.103.

In August 1655 Cardenas sent Condé's representative to see Cromwell when news of the attack on Hispaniola and Jamaica had reached London, and he came away from the meeting of the opinion that Cromwell was still open to negotiation and that war was not inevitable. Even as late as October 1655 it was rumoured in London diplomatic circles that after the first news of the attacks had arrived and it seemed that the expedition had failed completely, the English would soon withdraw from Jamaica and non-hostile relations with Spain would be restored. Indeed even when Cardenas was withdrawn from London that same month he suggested that the breach was not complete and that a new ambassador could be sent if desired. The events during the autumn of 1655 suggest that though hostilities had commenced there was still a willingness to avoid all-out war in Europe on the part of the Spanish and so it was not inevitable that war in Europe would follow.[82] Even then, Spain's initial formal response – the withdrawal of its ambassador from London and the placing of an embargo on English property in Spain – was limited and hardly an act of war. Despite Spanish anger with Cromwell over the unprovoked attack, as they saw it, their situation was such that they were unable to respond with force in Europe. Indeed when war was declared in October 1655 it was by the English, and not by the Spanish, as a response to Spain's limited and fairly mild diplomatic response. The outbreak of war in Europe was not as an inevitable consequence of the West Indies attack and certainly had Cromwell wanted to refrain from his declaration of war and continue his war of words with Spain, this would have been seen as a more preferable outcome in Madrid, despite their fury and embarrassment. Cromwell chose to cross the line between peace and war in Europe as a deliberate matter of policy; Spain even at this late stage was prepared to negotiate rather than fight.

Despite the English deciding to pursue an anti-Spanish policy in the summer of 1654 and to launch a covert attack in the West Indies, Cromwell had no intention of broadcasting his intentions to either the Spanish or the French at that time. With the decision to send a fleet into the Caribbean made, it would be many months before the fleet would sail and another month before it would arrive in the West Indies. It would then need to recruit and prepare before making an attack, the reports of which would then take several months to reach Europe. It was very likely that the news of the English attack would only be known to Spain in the middle of 1655, which gave the English almost a year before needing to deal with the political and diplomatic fallout that proceeded from it. Cromwell believed that the attack in the West Indies would not lead to a breach with Spain and war in Europe and so was quite prepared to continue his charade of playing France and Spain off until news was received the following year of the expected English success, and he would only then need to placate the Spanish once he had gauged their reaction and response to his attack. Cromwell knew full well how much Spain needed an alliance with England, or at least how much it did not want an English alliance with France, and therefore he was confident that Spain would do nothing in response to the rumours until it received definitive news of an English attack, for fear of pushing England into alliance with France. As such, whilst England prepared for war in the Caribbean, the diplomatic game with the two Catholic powers in Europe continued apace. It was no secret that in the latter months of 1654 England was preparing not one, but two fleets for war, but where, when and against whom they would be launched was a matter of speculation, even if most observers believed one at least was bound for America. Cromwell was happy to let rumour and counter-rumour spread and was probably the source of much misinformation as he let Europe guess what his intentions were. In the meantime he began his preparations for his Western Design.[83]

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[81] Rev. G.N. Godwin, *The Civil War in Hampshire (1642–45) and the Story of Basing House* (Southampton: Henry March Gilbert and Son, 1904).

[82] Samuel Rawson Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, 1649–1656*, Vol. 4 (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1903), p.169; Allen B. Hinds (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers Relating To English Affairs in the Archives of Venice, 1655–1656*, Vol. 30 (London: 1930), p.122; Venning, *Foreign Policy*, pp.104, 105.

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[83] It is intended that the circumstances of the actual breach with Spain in 1655, and how this led to war in Europe, will be explored more fully in a subsequent work by this author.

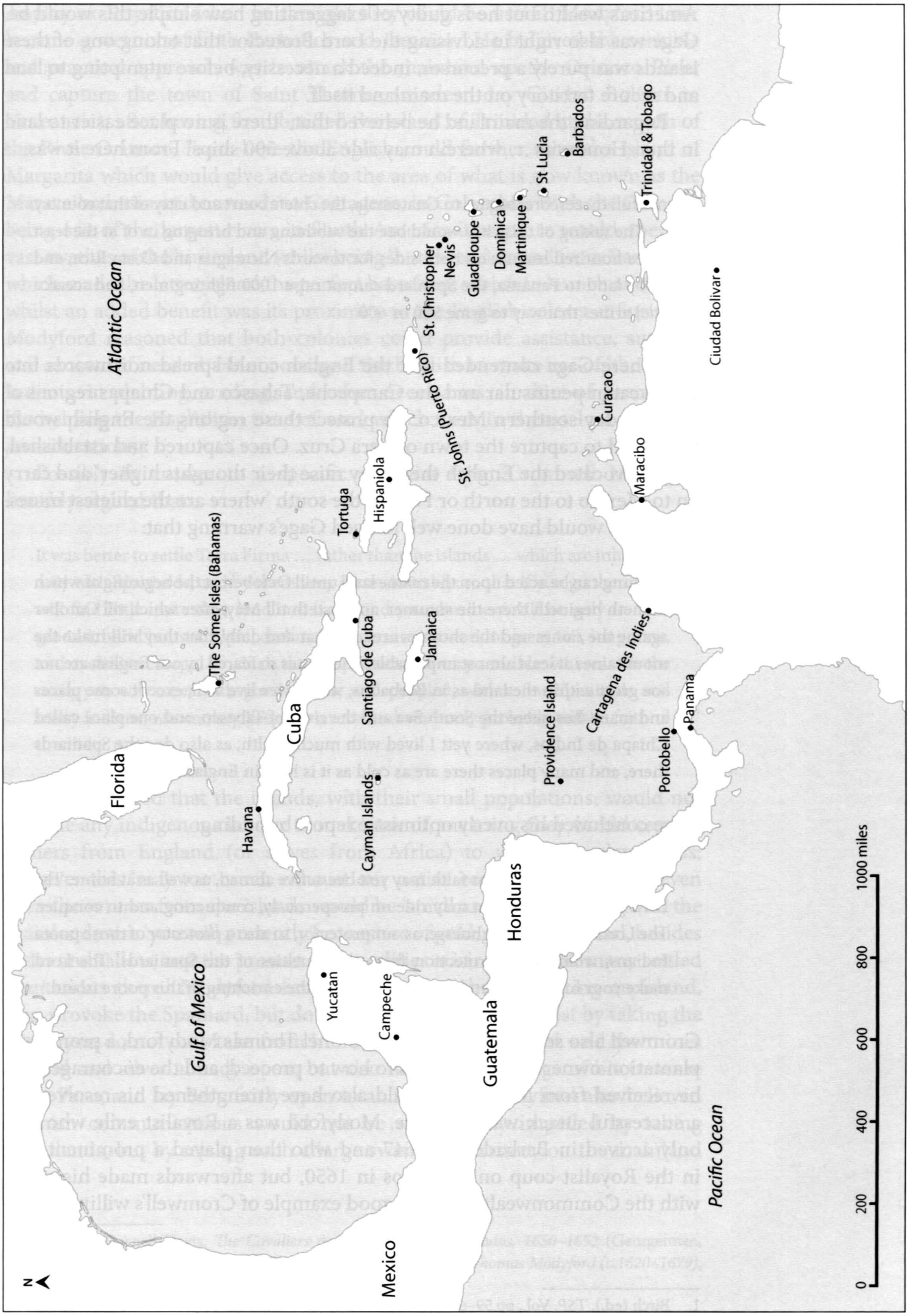
2

The Preparations

In early 1654 Cromwell had received two separate proposals as to how the English could proceed with conquering the Spanish Empire in South America, both of which must have swelled his enthusiasm for the venture, for both exaggerated the simplicity of implementing his design whilst ignoring many of the likely difficulties the expedition would encounter. Thomas Gage had been asked to provide the Lord Protector his thoughts on the scheme and he submitted a lengthy report, most likely very early in 1654, in which he claimed that any conquest of Spanish South America would not be as hard or as difficult as perhaps thought. He argued that even though the Spanish possessions were vast they were sparsely populated by the Spaniards themselves, whilst on the mainland even the larger cities were poorly fortified with minimal walls, castles or even artillery. He believed that:

> The Spaniards cannot oppose much, being a lazy, sinfull people, feeding like beasts upon their lusts, and upon the fat of the land, and never trained up to warres; over whom there can be no fitt commanders suddainely (there being few or none in the land experienced in martial disipline) nor armes or ammunition (in some parts) in two hundred leagues to arme or strengthen six hundred fighting men.

Gage sensibly suggested that the English should first attack and capture either Hispaniola or Cuba before attempting to attack the mainland. He wrote, 'Hispaniola was the Spaniards first plantation, and therefore would bee to them a bad omen to beginne to loose that, which they first enjoyed.' Whilst it had no riches it did have plenty of land for farming and was ideally placed to be a base for an attack upon the mainland. Cuba on the other hand was far richer, whilst Havana, the largest settlement on the island, was the consolidation port for the departing Spanish galleons laden with treasure and so its capture would severely disrupt their commerce and maybe even lead to the capture of all or part of the treasure fleet. Making Havana's capture sound like a formality, Gage noted that, 'Thus with a fleet at sea before the castle, or in fight to terrific, and a party by land on the backe of Havana, that strong place might bee gained, and the castles starved, and with Havana all the island conquered, which is the key of all the Indias.' Gage was correct in this. If Havana was captured the English could choke off the export of South


Atlantic Ocean
Gulf of Mexico
Florida
Havana
Cuba
Cayman Islands
Santiago de Cuba
Jamaica
The Somer Isles (Bahamas)
Tortuga
Hispaniola
St. Johns (Puerto Rico)
St. Christopher
Nevis
Guadeloupe
Dominica
Martinique
St Lucia
Barbados
Trinidad & Tobago
Curacao
Maracibo
Ciudad Bolivar
Cartagena des Indies
Providence Island
Portobello
Panama
Honduras
Guatemala
Yucatan
Campeche
Mexico
Pacific Ocean
N
0
200
400
600
800
1000 miles

Map 1 The West Indies, c.1655.

America's wealth but he is guilty of exaggerating how simple this would be. Gage was also right in advising the Lord Protector that taking one of these islands was purely a precursor, indeed a necessity, before attempting to land and secure territory on the mainland itself.

Regarding the mainland he believed that, 'there is no place easier to land in then Honduras ... wherein may ride above 500 ships'. From here it was:

> not full threescore leagues to Guatemala, the chiefe court and citty of that country ... The taking of this citty would bee the subduing and bringing in of at the least three hundred leagues on both sides for towards Nicaragua and Costa Rica, and so by land to Panama, the Spaniard cannot raise 1000 fighting men, and scearce [*sic*] armes that way to arme 500 or 600.

From here Gage contended that the English could spread northwards into the Yucatán peninsular and the Campeche, Tabasco and Chiapas regions of modern-day southern Mexico. To protect these regions the English would then need to capture the town of Vera Cruz. Once captured and established, Gage advocated the English then 'may raise their thoughts higher' and carry on to Mexico to the north or Peru to the south 'where are the chiefest mines'. Cromwell would have done well to heed Gage's warning that:

> Nothing can be acted upon the maine land untill October; at the begining of which moneth begineth there the summer, and lasteth till May, after which till October againe the raines and the showers are foe great and daily, that they will make the mountaines at least almost unpassable. The heates so feared by our English are not soe great within the land as in Barbados, where wee live well, except some places and marrishes neere the South Sea and the river of Tabasco, and one place called Chiapa de Indios, where yett I lived with much health, as also doe the Spaniards there, and many places there are as cold as it is here in England.

Gage concluded his overly optimistic report by adding:

> The Lord grant, that your faith may yett bee active abroad, as well as at home. The Lord grant, that yett you may ride on prosperously, conquering and to conquer. The Lord make your highnesse, as our protector, so also a protector of those poore Indians, which want protection from the cruelties of the Spaniards. The Lord make your highnesse yett his instrument, for the enriching of this poore island.[1]

Cromwell also sought the advice of Colonel Thomas Modyford, a prominent plantation owner in Barbados, as to how to proceed, and the encouragement he received from Modyford would also have strengthened his resolve that a successful attack was plausible. Modyford was a Royalist exile who had only arrived in Barbados in 1647 and who then played a prominent role in the Royalist coup on Barbados in 1650, but afterwards made his peace with the Commonwealth. He is a good example of Cromwell's willingness to employ ex-Royalists when he thought they could be useful. Modyford later became governor of both Barbados and Jamaica.[2] He believed the sensible and practical approach was to attack the mainland up the Orinoco River and capture the town of Saint Thomas (modern-day Ciudad Bolívar in Venezuela), after having first fortified the island of Trinidad at the mouth of the River Orinoco. From here the English could further seize the island of Margarita which would give access to the area of what is now known as the Maracaibo basin and onwards to Cartagena, in Colombia. With the Orinoco being one of the largest rivers in South America its capture would open up vast swathes of the hinterland whilst being 'but three days sail from Barbados', which made the latter island the perfect base from which to launch an attack, whilst an added benefit was its proximity to the English colony at Surinam. Modyford reasoned that both colonies could provide assistance, supplies and succour if needed. He encouraged the English to make use of 'the naked Indians, in planting, trading, and other necessaries, in time of peace, and the helping the English in time of war', which were in themselves no mean considerations.[3]

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[1] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol., pp.59–61.

Possibly in answer to a specific question from Cromwell Modyford sensibly argued that:

> It was better to settle Terra Firma … rather than the islands … which are inhabited only with Spaniards, and by them very inconsiderably; so that if you go there, you will find little more than land and trees, and your business will be only to clear ground, build houses, plant, and make inclosures; a work of great toil, long time, and excessive charge, of which the old planters are very sensible: whereas on the main you will meet with good towns, well peopled, with a few Spaniards and many Indians, whom they keep in slavery, and who very probably will be faithful to milder masters.

He rightly added that the islands, with their small populations, would not provide any indigenous labour to make use of, meaning they would require settlers from England (or slaves from Africa) to work the plantations; however this 'may too much exhaust our native country of men' and even then the returns from the islands would be 'small and so slow', unlike on the mainland were 'you will presently be masters of gold, silver, and pearl, besides hides and tallow, and the present commodities arising from the many settled plantations there.' Modyford further postulated that by seizing an island, 'you provoke the Spaniard, but do not at all disable him', whilst
Main 'you do not only take from him the benefit of his pearl, and the mines of gold and silver already open, but also hinder the passage of his treasure from Peru, and lay Peru fairly open to an invasion'. Modyford also believed Spanish communications would not be significantly impeded by taking the islands, but by seizing such a large swathe of territory on the mainland

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[2] Nicholas Darnell Davis, *The Cavaliers & Roundheads of Barbados, 1650–1652* (Georgetown, British Guiana: Argosy Press, 1887), p.80; Nuala Zahedieh, *Sir Thomas Modyford (c.1620–1679), ODNB.*

[3] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, pp.62–63.

his communications and resupply from Spain would be severely impacted. Modyford concluded his assessment with the sensible recommendation that whoever was sent to lead the expedition should have authority over all 'the governors of the English in any part of America; and that his highness's orders be directed to them to that purpose'.[4] He rightly anticipated the necessity of ensuring a single commander be given the authority he needed to manage the expedition. Unfortunately this sensible advice was not followed.

Neither Gage's or Modyford's proposals were concrete plans in themselves for they simply provided opinions and options from two people with some considerable knowledge of the region, but that proffered some alternative approaches for further consideration. As a next step in his preparations, Cromwell on 18 August 1654 appointed a committee 'for the Ordering and manageing of the designe and undertakeing' of the expedition to the West Indies, seemingly under the chairmanship of Andrew Riccard. This committee formally sat from August 1654 until at least March 1655 and was tasked to consider all aspects of the planning, supply and logistics related to the expedition and to make recommendations to Cromwell and the Council of State accordingly. The 13 committee members appointed were a mixture of experienced military and naval commanders, merchants, colonial traders and civil government administrators, most of whom had direct experience of South America in one form or another.[5]

(Sir) Andrew Riccard was at the time an alderman and member of the Worshipful Company of Drapers in the City of London, but in 1651 had also been the Sheriff of London. Coming from humble origins he had risen to become a wealthy, influential and successful merchant in London and was connected to the Earl of Warwick through the marriage of his daughter to the Earl's son, the 2nd Earl of Holland. He served as governor of both the East India Company and the Levant Company for extended periods throughout his life and in 1654 was elected to the first Protectorate Parliament as member for the City of London, whilst at the Restoration he was knighted by King Charles II.[6]

Not surprisingly General-at-Sea William Penn, who was to command the English fleet, and General Robert Venables, commander of the army, were amongst those appointed to Riccard's committee.

Colonel James Heane had served the Parliamentarian cause in the West of England during the First Civil War and was governor of the garrison of Weymouth in 1648. In October 1651 he was given command of the land forces that accompanied Robert Blake's fleet that had been sent to capture Jersey, and was instrumental in the success and the speedy capitulation of the island.

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[4] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, pp.62–63.

[5] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.107–108.

[6] Timothy Venning, *Sir Andrew Riccard (1603/4–1672)*, *ODNB*; Alfred P Beavan, 'Notes on the aldermen, 1502–1700', in *The Aldermen of the City of London Temp. Henry III – 1912*, Vol. 1 (London: Eden Fisher & Company, 1908), p.341; Willis Browne, *Notitia Parliamentaria, Or, An History of the Counties, Cities, and Boroughs in England and Wales, that send Members to Parliament* (London: Willis Browne, 1750), p.263.

Presumably this led to his appointment as Major General of the army under Venables in 1654 and his selection to serve on Riccard's committee. He was a well-known and well-respected soldier who had served the Parliamentarian cause faithfully and his premature death at San Domingo in April 1655 was sorely lamented both amongst the army and amongst the population back in England. Undoubtedly the reason for his selection to the committee was the experience that he brought of coordinating land and sea forces during the attack on Jersey. Venables was later to state that he had aspirations for the command of the entire venture himself in the West Indies.[7]

Maurice Thomson was a self-made man who had become one of wealthiest and most influential merchants in the City of London and who had long pushed for greater English involvement in the West Indies, and so was an obvious appointee to the committee. He had made his fortune in the tobacco trade in Virginia in the 1620s and was the largest single importer of the commodity into England in 1642. He later had diversified business interests in the interloping trade in the East Indies, ship-owning and the slave trade, with extensive land holdings in Virginia, Maryland, Ireland and in the English West Indian islands. He was a shareholder in the Provident Island Company and helped finance Jackson's two raids on the Spanish Caribbean. As an influential London merchant he cultivated close ties with the Commonwealth government and sat on numerous trade-related committees. He had also been sent to the Dutch Republic in 1648 in the failed attempt to negotiate the return of English naval ships that had mutinied and sought refuge there. He constantly lobbied for the opening up of the trade held by the East India and Levant companies and later became governor of the East India Company in 1657. After the Restoration his close ties to Oliver Cromwell led him to be regarded as politically unreliable and charges were soon brought against him and his brother in 1666 for passing information to the Dutch navy. Nothing came of these accusations however. He was described 'as always violent against kingly government, he was intimate with the protector, sat at the High Court of Justice, and sentenced some of the beheaded Lords ... He was once a poor fellow in Virginia, but got a great estate in the wars, mostly rained out of the bowels of the King's party.'[8]

Little is known of the early life of Captain John Lymberry (Limberry, Lymerye), another committeeman. In 1648 he accompanied Thomson to the Netherlands to try to obtain the return of naval vessels,[9] whilst in 1649 he and Thomas Alderne were appointed navy victuallers.[10] In 1651, along with Thomson, he was appointed to the Commonwealth's newly formed Council of Trade.[11] He signed his name on two letters from the Riccard committee to Cromwell in August 1654, and so presumably played an active part in the committee's deliberations. He is mentioned in Edward Montague's notes concerning the expedition in

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[7] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.79.

[8] Valerie Pearl, *Maurice Thomson or Thompson (1604-1676), ODNB.*

[9] Robert Brenner, *Merchants and revolution commercial change, political conflict, and London's overseas traders, 1550-1653* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p.530.

[10] Brenner, *Merchants & Revolution*, p.555.

[11] Brenner, *Merchants & Revolution*, p.607.

April 1654 when it was noted that 'Capt. Hatsell and Capt. Lymerye (both which have lived and traded in Hispaniola)' were invited to address the Council and who then proceeded to argue that seizing Hispaniola would be a good start to the expedition. His name does not occur anywhere else in the records that are extant for the expedition. A John Limberry was appointed as a Commissioner of Militia for the Tower Hamlets in March 1660 – this is most likely the same person. Having spent time living in Hispaniola he presumably was able to provide some relevant input as to the conditions the expedition would face if it chose to proceed there.[12] (Sir) William Rider (Ryder) was yet another self-made merchant with extensive connections in the City of London and the government who served on the committee. Initially a trader of spices, he was also a significant investor in the East India Company, of which he would later become deputy governor. He had close business ties with both Thomson and Riccard. During the First Dutch War he purchased tar and wooden masts in the Baltic which he then sold to the navy, and he remained a navy contractor for the rest of his life, and it was his knowledge supplying the navy that led to his appointment on Riccard's Committee. After the Restoration he worked closely with Samuel Pepys at the Navy Office and was knighted by Charles II.[13]

Captain Thomas Alderne was another City merchant as well as a significant navy victualler, and his name appears regularly in government correspondence regarding the supplies for the navy throughout the Commonwealth period.[14] In 1648 the government had utilised his services to assist in apprehending rebellious persons in Kent after the uprising there and so was deemed to be a reliable supporter of the Parliament.[15] In November 1650 when he and other victuallers were in negotiations with the Parliamentarian Committee of the Navy, he was described as a 'Citizen of London', whilst in the following year he was appointed to the Committee of the Militia of the City of London. In December 1655 two traders petitioned to the Admiralty Commissioners complaining that after having provided victuals to Alderne in November 1654 they had still not been paid. As a major navy victualler it made sense for him to be part of the deliberations of the Committee.[16] William Williams was another associate of Thomson and Riccard from the East India and Levant Companies. He was a trader and ship-owner. His father, John, was a director of the East India Company and one-time treasurer of the Levant Company.[17] He was influential and important enough to be elected to the managing committee of the East India Company on numerous occasions throughout the 1650s, and so was presumably appointed to the expedition committee for his commercial experience and connections within the trading community of London.[18]

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[12] Firth (ed.), *Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3 (London: The Camden Society, 1891), p.204.

[13] C.S. Knighton, *Sir William Rider (d. 1669), ODNB*.

[14] Brenner, *Merchants & Revolution*, p.555.

[15] Brenner, *Merchants & Revolution*, p.531.

[16] *Journal of the House of Commons: 1648–1651*, Vol. 6 (London:1802), pp.500, 619; Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD 1654*, p.420.

[17] Brenner, *Merchants & Revolution*, p.385.

[18] Ethel Bruce Sainsbury, *The court minutes, etc. of the East India company, 1650–1654*, Vol. 4 (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1913); Ethel Bruce Sainsbury, *The court minutes, etc. of the East India company, 1655–1659*, Vol. 5 (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1916).

Captain William Goodsonn also served on Riccard's committee. Originally from Yarmouth, during 1634[19] he had lived for some time in the city of Cartagena in modern day Colombia, and had thus gained a familiarity with the West Indies. He only seems to have become an officer in the English navy in 1653 and prior to that had been a ship-owner in his own right. He took part in the Battle of Portland in February 1653 and later served under George Monck, and in the summer of 1654 he was appointed vice admiral of the blue squadron under William Penn which was fitting out in Portsmouth in anticipation of the West Indies campaign. After Penn's departure from Jamaica Goodsonn was constituted full admiral and commander-in-chief of the naval forces that remained in Jamaica. He seems to have been a competent sailor and an effective administrator. In 1655 he undertook two forays attacking Spanish possessions around the Caribbean, but in April 1657 Goodsonn returned to England and later served with the English squadron of both Mardyke and Dunkirk in 1657–58 during the European portion of the Anglo-Spanish War. After the Restoration he disappears from the historical record, though in 1662 it was rumoured that he was involved with a plot to kill the King. He seems to have died sometime after 1680.[20]

William Vincent was yet another merchant involved with the East India and Levant companies who sat with Riccard. He had served on committees for both companies at various times and was also a significant purchaser of the various commodities and spices that they shipped back to England from India and the East Indies.[21] He was prominent in stating the case of the company merchants regarding the proposed Free Ports policy in 1651.[22] Prior to the arrival of Charles II in May 1660 Vincent was one of the London merchants who issued a Letter of Credit for 25,000*l* 'to be paid at Amsterdam, being … for his Majesty's Use', which sum was to repaid 'upon the Credit of the Ordnance for Three Months Assessments' at some point in the future.[23] In 1650 John Brookhaven, another of member of Riccard's committee, was master of the East India Company ship the *Lioness* when he sailed with additional colonists to the Company's failed colony of Assada (modern-day Nosy Be, an island of the north-west coast of Madagascar). In 1653 he was master of the company ship *Love*, whilst in 1658 he was considered for the position of President of the Company's Surat (Gujarat, India) trading post. He was obviously a respected sea captain and a competent administrator. After the Restoration he played an active role in the government's administration of its North American and Barbados settlements.[24]

The last named member of Riccard's committee was (Sir) Martin Noel (Noell/Nowell) a significant London merchant and financier, a long-time business associate of Maurice Thomson and influential member of the East

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[19] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 4, p.543.

[20] Bernard Capp, *William Goodsonn [Goodson] (b. 1609/10, d. in or after 1680), ODNB.*

[21] Sainsbury, *East India Company*, Vol. 4; Sainsbury, *East India Company*, Vol. 5.

[22] Brenner, *Merchants & Revolution*, p.615.

[23] *Journal of the House of Commons: 1660–1667*, Vol. 8 (London: 1802), p.20.

[24] Sainsbury, *East India Company*, Vol. 4, p.v; Sainsbury, *East India Company*, Vol. 5, p.266; W. Noel Sainsbury (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies 1661–1668*, Vol. 5 (London: 1880), p.127.

India Company. He had extensive dealings with the Government throughout the 1650s and served on numerous committees dealing with trade and the West Indies.[25] He seems to have made his fortune trading with Nevis and Montserrat then later with New England, Virginia and the West Indies. During the Dutch War his ships carried letters of marque.[26] In November 1654 at the request of the Cromwell and the Council of State he personally advanced 16,000*l* 'for the fleet and forces' for the West Indies expedition.[27] He, along with Captain Alderne, was granted commissions to provide supplies for Penn's fleet, he was Venables' personal agent in London and later the agent in the City for the army in Jamaica. After the capture of Jamaica he was granted 20,000 acres of land there but there was no mention of this still being in his possession in his will of 1665.[28] He was also an excise farmer for salt from which he supplemented his personal fortune.[29] He and Thomas Povey[30] proposed the creation of a West India Company in 1659 that never eventuated and he submitted many proposals to the Council of State on how trade could be extended in the West Indies after the capture of Jamaica.[31] Noel died of the plague in London in September 1665, after which Samuel Pepys was to write of the complications of his will due to the complexities of his commercial interests, 'but it seems nobody can make anything of his estate, whether he be dead worth anything or no, he having dealt in so many things, publique and private, as nobody can understand whereabouts his estate is, which is the fate of these great dealers at everything.'[32]

At the time of the formation of Riccard's committee the destination of the expedition and the composition of both the army and navy had not yet been finalised. As such the committee was instructed by Cromwell to concern itself with the current state of the preparations hitherto made and to review them to ascertain what was 'defective or short' in them and to notify the Council of State in writing of how best to rectify these deficiencies. In addition to reviewing the arrangements already in place they were to consider what else was required for the 'carrying on this present designe' as well as what else might be required for both the army and navy after it had departed from England. They were also required to identify 'two fitt persons' to be dispatched immediately for Barbados and the other English islands, to 'communicate there with such persons as shalbe thought fitt' and make the necessary preparations there for the arrival of the expedition. Cromwell added that the committee ought to consider 'what Forces and supplies will bee fitt to be sent after the presente Fleet, and of the time of sending them'.

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[25] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD 1655*, p.240; Charles A. Andrews, *British committees, commissions, and councils of trade and plantations, 1622–1675* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1908), p.50.

[26] Andrews, *British committees*, pp.49–50.

[27] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.393.

[28] Andrews, *British committees*, p.50.

[29] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.451.

[30] See Barbara C. Murison, *Thomas Povey (b. 1613/14, d. in or before 1705), ODNB.*

[31] Andrews, *British committees*, pp.49–60.

[32] B. Henry Wheatley (ed.), *The diary of Samuel Pepys*, Vol. 5 (London: George Bell & Sons, 1895), p.109; Anon., *Sir Martin Noell (bap. 1614, d. 1665), ODNB.*

Furthermore the committee was to consider 'the best and most probable meanes for the Carrying on and ymprovement [*sic*] of this undertaking' while, if it was to prove initially successful, to consider how best to capitalise on the success. This think-tank was instructed from time to time to 'certifie to us your opinions and advice'.[33]

Unfortunately there are few direct records left as to the deliberations or actions of this committee and so it is hard to ascertain what influence as a group, beneficial or otherwise, they had on the preparations for the expedition. On about 14 August 1654, even before the committee had been formally constituted, it wrote to Cromwell providing the names of people they considered 'fit persons' who might be of assistance to the expedition, which included Edward Winslow, Richard Holdip and Daniel Searle (all of whom were to play important roles in the expedition). In Barbados they recommended involving both Colonel Lewis Morris and Thomas Modyford (who was already known to Cromwell). The committee also recommended Luke Stokes, the governor of Nevis, as a person who might be of use to the expedition once it arrived in the West Indies.[34]

The committee also quickly recommended what victuals ought to be sent with the expedition when it departed and provided a list to Cromwell on 14 August.[35] It also gave a very long list of supplies to be shipped on board each ship accompanying the expedition as well what clothing might be needed on 29 August, along with their recommendations on how to solve the acute manpower shortage in the navy, which Thompson might have delivered personally to Cromwell.[36] Thereafter there are no extant records of the committee's activity until March 1655 when it recommended additional supplies be sent to supplement those sent with Penn when it departed.[37] Most likely the committee, like many set up by the government at the time, was only intended to be a temporary body to review the preparations and make recommendations that were then implemented when the expedition was assembled in the autumn of 1654, and as such its influence was of a limited duration. Some of its members, Noel in particular, were to have a long and influential impact on West Indies policy for many years to come. Riccard's name appears at the top of each list of those who signed the few letters issued by the committee that survive, and so it reasonable to assume that he had been nominated its chairman. The composition of this committee is telling. Of the 13 members only four were military (Penn, Venables, Heane and Goodsonn). Of the others none were government servants – they were all private individuals each with a particular expertise relevant to the expedition. These were merchants or seafarers with intimate knowledge of finance, commerce, victualling and the West Indies. If this composition illustrates anything of the motivation for the expedition it is surely that it was primarily of a commercial nature from which pecuniary advantage was expected from all the stakeholders. Also of interest is that there was no representative providing spiritual assistance. This was a committee focused purely on earthly matters.

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[33] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.107–108.

[34] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 2, p.543.

[35] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 4, p.542.

[36] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 4, pp.571–574, 559.

[37] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.203.

The instructions to the committee were for practical considerations related to the organising, dispatch and immediate aftermath of the expedition whilst it was not requested to consider how it was to be commanded nor how it was to be deployed. That both Penn and Venables were appointed to this organising committee suggests that they had been already chosen to lead the military elements of the expedition before August, as had Heane. Cromwell had decided that he would appoint five commissioners who would direct and command the expedition, two of whom would be the commanders of the army and fleet. In December 1654 Cromwell formally appointed Robert Venables separately a commissioner and commander of the army and William Penn a commissioner and commander of the fleet along with the civilian commissioners Edward Winslow, Daniel Searle and Gregory Butler.[38] Winslow and Searle might well have been appointed on the recommendation of Riccard's committee, who certainly thought highly of them. Most likely Venables and Penn were selected very early in the preparation phase, whilst the other three after more consideration in the autumn, but all would have been made aware of their roles well before their commissions were issued. In the commissions issued to these commissioners Cromwell described them as persons of 'knowne prudence, Wisdome, and fidelitie'.[39] The command structure that Cromwell put in place was to prove problematic, however. Rather than appoint a single overall commander of the expedition he decided to appoint five commissioners to give overall guidance to the expedition and seek mutual agreement between themselves for all major decisions, whilst Penn was clearly mandated as commander of naval forces and Venables the army. These five were to be 'our commissioners for the ordering mannageing and Governeing the Affaires … [and that they use their] utmost dilligence and endeavours for the Carrying on and promoting the same.'[40] Cromwell gave no specific written guidelines that have survived on how the commissioners were to gain consensus amongst themselves or how disagreements were to be resolved. Written instructions were given to both Venables and Penn on how to conduct their respective commands, but these were vague when it came to co-operating with each of the other commissioners. Venables, after his arrival at Barbados, was instructed 'upon consideration had with the Commissioners … use your best endeavers by such wayes, and meanes as you with the advise of the said Commissioner or any two of them, shal judge most convenient and expeditious.' These instructions continued 'We leave it to you, and the Commissioners aforesaid … that after due consideration had amongst yourselves … to take such resolutions concerning the making of the attempts, and the mannageing [*sic*], and carrying on this whole Design, as you and the said Commissioners … shal seeme most effectual.' In a similar vein he was instructed after seeking the advice from the commissioners in making decisions to notify Cromwell of them 'by an Express'. Venables had the authority 'with the advise of the said Commissioners' to establish garrisons 'as you by advise aforesaid shal thinke necessary...' His instructions ended: 'You are therefore upon al such accidents relating to your charge to use your best circumspection, And by advise eyther with the said Commissioners or your councel of War as occasion maybe, to Order and dispose of the Forces under your Command as may be most advantagious for the publique...'[41] Even if his written instructions were vague, there is no doubt that Venables was well aware that the command and deployment of the army was his ultimate responsibility, as he was to find out only to clearly on his return to England. Penn's instructions were equally lengthy. He was to seek Venables' advice with regards to the distribution of the army amongst his fleet so 'that no one ship may overcharged with men, which may cause infection'. It was made clear to him 'you shall, with the fleet and sea forces, from time to time, by the advice of the said Commissioners, or any three of you, do your utmost endeavours to promote the service upon all occasions'. He was required to land the army 'as the nature of the service shall require with the advice of the said commissioners...' He was to dispose of the fleet by using 'your best circumspection, and by the advice, either with the commissioners, or your council of war, as occasion maybe...'[42]

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[38] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.109–110.

[39] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.109–110.

[40] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.109–110.

According to Robert Venables when Cromwell asked him to command the army (sometime after his arrival from Ireland on 29 April 1654)[43] he had asked that his arrears of pay be settled first. Cromwell replied that he ought to submit his petition in writing, which he did and this was considered by the Council of State on 19 June 1654 but the petition might have been submitted as early as 24 May, which further suggests that plans for the expedition were well under way even before the 20 July Council of State meeting and that Venables had been selected army commander informally as early as May, if not before. However he was only being referred to, within the Government at least, as the commander-in-chief of the expedition from at least 29 August, although is commission was only dated in December.[44] Venables, from Antrobus in Cheshire, had served the Parliamentarian cause throughout the Civil War. A Captain in December 1642, he was captured at the Battle of Warcock Hill (near Manchester) in early 1643 but was soon released for he saw service with Sir William Brereton at the siege of Chester in July 1643. According to Venables he fought at various locations in Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire, Shropshire and in North Wales as well as the sieges of Nantwich and Montgomery Castle and the fights at Leebridge and Christleton.[45] In 1645 he was governor of the small Parliamentarian garrison of Tarvin (Cheshire) and was later wounded at the siege of Chester. He seems to have served in Wales in 1648–1649, and then as a colonel commanding a regiment of foot, he and his regiment were sent to Ireland in 1649. He served as commander of the English forces in Ulster and fought at the Battle of Rathmines on 2 August 1649, outside Dublin. Given independent commanded he acquitted himself admirably throughout his time in Ireland and it was here that he demonstrated enough ability for Cromwell to consider him for command of the army for the West Indies. Most likely Cromwell and Venables had met during Cromwell's time in Ireland, if not before, and he had left a favourable impression on Cromwell. Blamed for the disaster in the Caribbean, Venables was arrested and confined in the Tower of London for a short while before being released in late 1655, after which he seems to have returned to Cheshire. He is believed to have supported Booth's uprising in 1659 whilst in March 1660 General Monck appointed him governor of Chester Castle. After the Restoration he was to write a treatise entitled *The Experienced Angler*. He died in 1687.[46]

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[41] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.109–110.

[42] Granville Penn, *Memorials of the professional life and times of Sir William Penn ... From 1644 to 1670*, Vol. 2, (London: J. Duncan, 1833), pp.23–27.

[43] TT, John Hall (ed.), *Mercurius Politicus, 27 April-4 May 1654*, London, p.3455.

[44] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.3; Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, pp.213–214, 339.

[45] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.2.

For a campaign of such strategic importance command of the fleet could only be assigned to one of the four generals-at-sea. John Desborough was no sailor and George Monck was by 1654 too well established as commander of the English army in Scotland to return to a naval command, which left the tried and trusted Blake and the new appointee, William Penn. Blake was probably the natural choice. He had first served as a soldier during the First Civil War before transitioning to the navy in 1649, where he had demonstrated his naval skills time and time again. The English victory in the First Dutch War was in no small part due to the brilliance of Blake's maritime leadership. He was however prone to sickness and this perhaps led Cromwell to believe he might not be able to withstand the rigours of this far away campaign. Also, no doubt, Cromwell thought he might well need his skills and ability in the waters around England should war with Spain break out once the attack in the West Indies became known. Penn, therefore, was probably selected to lead the fleet less on his ability to command and more because Blake needed to kept closer to home. The choice of commander of the fleet was therefore quite straightforward, but when Penn was actually informed that he was lead it to the West Indies is not clear; it was most likely around the same time that Venables was notified. Penn, the son of a merchant sailor, was born in Bristol in 1621. He is likely to have served first on his father's merchant vessels and only joined the English navy in 1644, aged 23. He served off the Irish coast from 1644 until 1650, lending close support to the army with which he closely operated. In 1650–51 he was in command of the *Fairfax* when he cruised the Atlantic and Mediterranean seeking out the Royalist fleet under Prince Rupert. In 1652 he served with distinction under Robert Blake during the Anglo-Dutch War when we was promoted to Vice admiral. In December 1653 he was appointed one of four generals-at-sea

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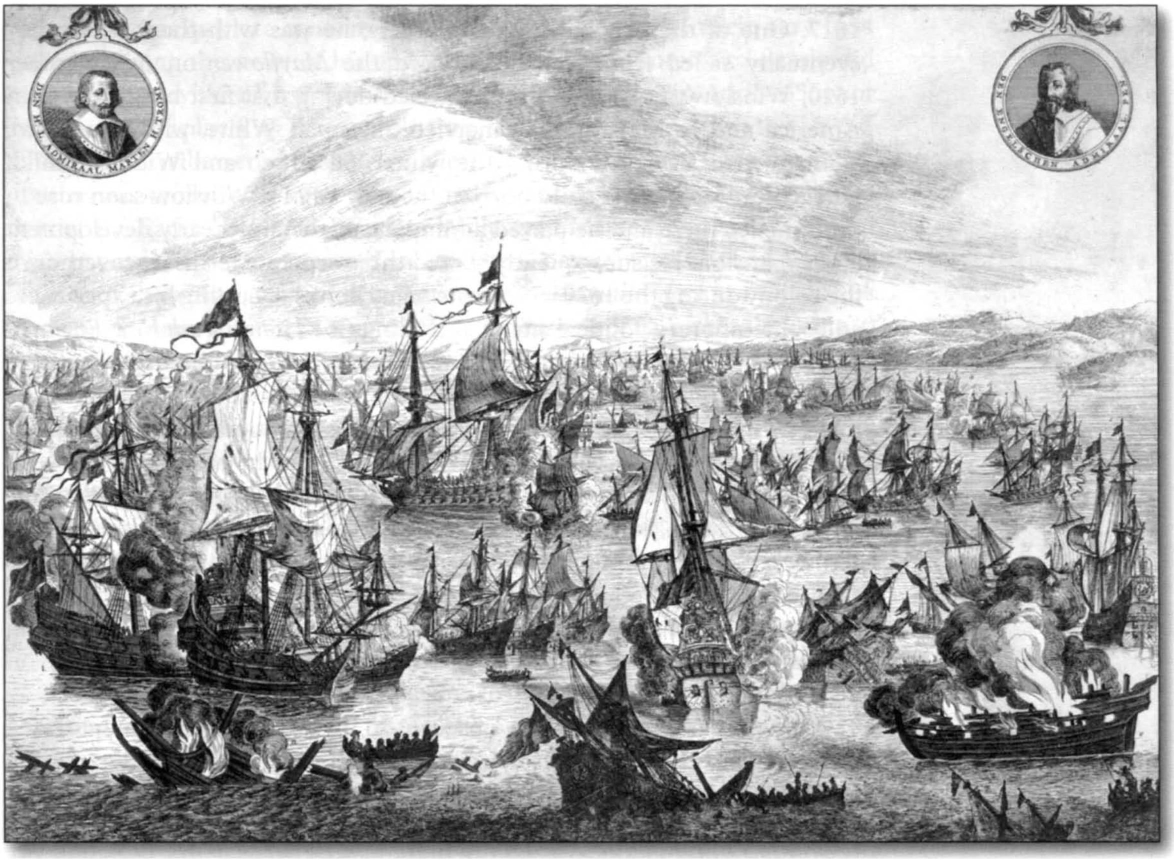
[46] Edward Robinson, *A discourse of the warr in Lancashire* (Manchester: The Chetham Society, 1864), pp.97–100; John Morrill, *Robert Venables (1612/13–1687), ODNB*; Elizabeth Venables, *Some account of General Robert Venables, of Antrobus and Wincham, Cheshire (with an engraving from his portrait at Wincham); together with the autobiographical memoir, or diary, of his widow, Elizabeth Venables*, Vol. 4 (Manchester: Chetham Society, 1871); Robert Venables, *The Experienced Angler* (London: T. Gosden, 1827 (reprint)).


DEN H. L. ADMIRAAL MARTEN H. TROMP
DEN ENGELSCHEN ADMIRAAL PEN

Engraving of Admiral William Penn [top right] c.1653 from Zeeslag bij Terheide, 1653. Pieter Nolpe. (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-76.975)

along with Blake, Monck and Desborough. Shortly afterwards he is alleged to have offered his fleet to the exiled Charles Stuart, though this was never proved, and this also might have led Cromwell to send him to keep him out of the way. Penn, like Venables, was arrested on his return to England from Jamaica in 1655 but retired to his estate in Ireland after his release where he is reported to have to corresponded with exiled Royalists. Monck brought him back into the navy in early 1660, and on 23 May 1660 he was present on board the *Naseby* when it collected King Charles II and returned him to England, when Penn was knighted. Under the new government he was employed in varying capacities in the navy and he served alongside the Duke of York at the Battle of Lowestoft in June 1665. He was Samuel Pepys' superior at the Admiralty, who referred to Penn as 'false a fellow as ever was born'. In 1639 he married a Dutch lady, Margaret Jasper, and they had two sons. The eldest, also called William, was a Quaker who later became the founder of the Pennsylvania colony. Penn died in 1670 and is buried in St. Mary Radcliffe church in Bristol where a memorial to him still stands.[47]

Edward Winslow was the most prominent of the civilian commissioners appointed by Cromwell. Born in Worcestershire in 1595 he was a committed Puritan who joined the exiled English congregation in Leiden, Holland in

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[47] C.S Knighton, *Sir William Penn (bap. 1621, d. 1670)*, *ODNB*; Penn, *Memorials*; Philip Syng Physick Conner, *Sir William Penn, Knight* (Albany: Munsell, 1876).

1617. One of the original Pilgrim Fathers, he was with them when they eventually sailed from England aboard the *Mayflower* on 6 September 1620. Winslow's first wife, Elizabeth, died during that first harsh winter in America and in May 1621 he married Susannah White, whose husband, William, had also died during the winter. Susannah and William's child, Peregrine, was the first child born in the new colony. Winslow soon rose to prominence there and he played an important role in its early development and expansion. He subsequently served three separate terms as governor of the colony during the 1630s. He wrote many books regarding his experiences and contemporary political affairs, including *Good newes from New-England: or, A true relation of things very remarkable at the plantation of Plimoth in New-England*. Winslow left New Plymouth in 1646 to represent the colony's interests in London, where he soon came to the attention of the government which over the next six years used his experience in colonial matters on various committees, as well as appointing him to the powerful committees for Sequestration, for Advancement of Money, and for Compounding with Delinquents. Recommended by Riccard's committee, his ability and his even-handed temperament made him an ideal candidate to accompany the expedition to the West Indies. Unfortunately he died after the defeat on Hispaniola and so the fledgling Jamaica colony was unable to capitalise on his undoubted ability and expertise.[48]

Daniel Searle's early life is obscure. In 1648 he was referred to as a merchant,[49] and in 1649 was appointed a contractor under the *Act for the Parks, Manors, and Lands of the late King, &c*,[50] whilst in 1650 he was involved with the issuance of Fee Farm Rents in Ireland and Scotland.[51] In February 1651 Searle was appointed one of three commissioners 'for reducing the island of Barbadoes and the inhabitants thereof to their due obedience to the Commonwealth', as well as a councillor to manage the colony once it had been subdued. He was with Sir George Ayscue throughout the campaign and he was one of those who signed *The Charter of Barbados* on 11 January 1652 when the Royalists surrendered the island to the Commonwealth. Ayscue soon departed for New England leaving Searle as governor of the island, a role he remained in until 1661.[52] Throughout his tenure as Governor of Barbados he maintained regular correspondence with Cromwell, to whom he seems to have been known before his dispatch with Ayscue to occupy the island. He was quick to confirm his allegiance to Cromwell in February 1654 after receiving the news of his appointment as Lord Protector.[53] Searle did not accompany the expedition once it departed Barbados in April 1655, nor was he able to play a significant role thereafter.

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[48] For more on life of his fascinating individual, and the early history of the New Plymouth colony that he helped to create see Len Travers, *Edward Winslow (1595–1655)*, *ODNB*; Maria Warren Whitman & Bryant Bryant, Herbert Pelham, *Genealogy of Edward Winslow of the Mayflower, and his descendants, from 1620 to 1865* (New Bedford: E. Anthony & Sons, 1915); David Parsons & Holton Holton, Frances, *Winslow memorial : family records of the Winslows and their descendants in America, with the English ancestry as far as known*, Vol. 1 (New York:1877); Rebecca Fraser, *The Mayflower: The Families, the Voyage, and the Founding of America* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2017).

[49] *Journal of the House of Commons: 1646–1648*, Vol. 5 (London:1802), p.478.

[50] *JHC 1648–1651*, Vol. 6, p.249.

[51] *JHC 1648–1651*, Vol. 6, p.520.

[52] W. Noel Sainsbury (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1574–1660*, Vol. 1 (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1860), pp.349–350; Davis, *Barbados 1650–1652*, pp.249–255.

The last civilian commissioner is the little-known Captain Gregory Butler. Butler was to claim in 1660 that he had served during the First Civil War under the Earl of Essex, Sir William Waller and Major General Massey, but in what capacity is not known.[54] In 1650 he is possibly the Captain Gregory Butler of the vessel *Rebecca*, who captured the *Swynhead* out of Dieppe. A Gregory Boteler submitted a proposal to the House of Commons relating to some maritime issue and this might well be the same person.[55] How he came to Cromwell's attention and what knowledge or experience he had that the Lord Protector deemed would be beneficial to the expedition is not known, although in his few letters that survive he gives the impression of being knowledgeable about the West Indies, and so probably had prior experience of the region.[56] It is possible that he was a relative of Nathaniel Butler, one-time governor of both Bermuda and Providence Island, privateer and colonial adventurer. Perhaps Gregory Butler was the same person who accompanied William Sayle when he and his group of religious Independents were exiled from Bermuda in 1649 and who set up the Eleuthera colony in the Bahamas. Little is known about this particular Butler other than he was argumentative, divisive and unpopular – the same attributes that Gregory Butler was to display throughout his involvement with the expedition.[57] Those officers that accompanied Butler on the expedition had little good to say of him. Winslow stated that he 'proved of very little value'. Major General Fortescue stated, 'I know not of what use he is, unless to make up the number ... he is the unfittest man for a commissioner I ever knew employed.'[58] Venables was also scathing in his comments about Butler. When Venables was sick on Jamaica he believed Butler had deliberately tried to turn the officers against him. He wrote to William Rowe, an Admiralty official back in England, that he had tried to:

> [set the] Officers in disgust against me, of which several complaints were made unto me; whereupon I told him of it, and indeed call'd him a drunken sot; for when the Treaty was betwixt the French Governour and us [on St. Christopher], he was so drunk that he fell from his Horse and vomitted, of which I have sufficient Witness, and my Lord Protector was much derided by them for employing such a man as he was in so honourable employment.[59]

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[53] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 4, pp.99–100.

[54] Thomas Birch (ed.), *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. 7 (London: Fletcher Gyles, 1742), p.912.

[55] *Journal of the House of Commons: 1651–1659*, Vol. 7 (London:1813), p.581.

[56] *JHC 1648–1651*, Vol. 6, pp.465–467.

[57] James Kendall Hosmer (ed.), *Winthrop's journal: 'History of New England', 1630-1649*, Vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), p.352.

[58] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.650.

[59] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.50.

From Barbados Butler had been sent ahead to raise recruits on St. Christopher and wrote numerous letters directly to Cromwell, and so was presumably on good terms with the Lord Protector. He quarrelled with Venables in Jamaica and quickly returned home. He seems to have received no censure for returning home without instructions, nor has any written explanation for his return survived. In July 1656 he petitioned for his arrears and claimed he had been 'diligent in the last West Indies expedition'. He also petitioned for a Letter of Marque to be issued to him allowing him to fit out a ship to attack Spanish vessels in the West Indies. This was granted and he was also loaned some pieces of cannon for his voyage. Whether his voyage ever eventuated and how successful it was is not known. He later petitioned to be appointed governor of Tortuga.[60]

Cromwell's choice of commissioners was poor. Neither Venables nor Penn proved up to the task of such elevated command and both fled for England as soon as they were able to. Winslow was perhaps the most suitable of all of them but died before he could make any impact. Searle, whose longevity as governor of Barbados suggests that he had many of the skills needed to manage the affairs of the expedition, seems to have been under no pressure to accompany the fleet once it left Barbados. Perhaps his appointment had been purely a practical matter of ensuring somebody with authority remained on the strategically important staging post in Barbados and who would be able to act as a conduit for information and supplies once the conquest began. His experience of colonial administration and government suggest he could have played an important role once Spanish territory had been seized, but events were to show that he was never asked to participate in the affairs once the fleet departed Barbados, and nor did he show any inclination to assist. Perhaps his opinion was never asked prior to his appointment. Butler seems to have had no skills nor experience that the expedition needed and played no positive role whatsoever, and he also left as soon as he could. Even had better-quality commissioners been appointed, the high death rate that the English encountered might well have denied them of their abilities, as has been the case with Winslow. The requirement that decisions needed to be made by at least three of the commissioners meant that a quorum could never be attained after July 1655. The failure to provide instruction on a process of succession if any of the commissioners died meant that Fortescue and Goodsonn were left with all of the responsibility, but without the authority to manage affairs once Penn, Venables and Butler had departed. This failure was not subsequently remedied, as Edward Doyley was to find out when he was forced to succeed both Robert Sedgwick and William Brayne without the appropriate authority. That Doyley succeeded in this was one of the few English success stories of the first years of the Jamaica colony.

A joint commission was issued to the five commissioners on 9 December 1654 but other than advising them of their appointment as commissioners it provided no instruction on how to proceed.[61] The commission contained a preamble justifying the attack in political, commercial and religious terms but no guidance on practical matters other than exhorting the commissioners to 'use your utmost dilligence and endeavours for the Carrying on and promoting' the enterprise. It seems that just this single, joint commission was issued to all five, and separate commissions were not issued to each individually. The commission does reference some supplementary instructions, but again it is unclear if these were issued to each individual, informing them of their specific responsibilities as a commissioner or if they were a joint set of instructions. Both Venables and Penn had joint responsibilities for they were both appointed commissioners of the entire expedition, plus they were individually appointed commanders of the army and fleet respectively. Penn's commission as commander of the fleet and supplementary instructions exist,[62] whilst Venables' instructions in his capacity as commander of the army also exist, but not his commission.[63] However, again it is unclear if these were the only instructions they both received or if some were also given in their capacity as commissioners which no longer exist. No individual commissions or instructions exist for Winslow, Searle or Butler but it would seem probable that at least some detailed instructions were provided. Without the specific instructions for the commissioners being extant it is unclear exactly how they were to proceed, formulate plans, seek consensus or resolve disputes amongst themselves. However it could be assumed that the detailed instructions given to Penn and Venables in their military capacities allude to those issued to the commissioners, at least in substance if not in detail.

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[60] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, pp.251, 650; Mary Anne Everett Green (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1656–7* (London: Longmans & Co, 1883), pp.33–34; Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col. 1574–1660*, p.477.

Penn's commission as commander of the fleet began in a similar vein as the commissioner's commission, with a justification for the actions that the English were about to perform. Penn was then given 'full power and authority to order, manage, and command' the fleet, was afforded the power to appoint and replace officers, and to 'exercise and execute the power of martial law' over the seamen, 'according to the general customs and laws of the sea.' All sailors serving in the fleet were to be obedient unto him and obey all commands he was to give.[64] Venables' commission, it might be assumed, provided him with similar authority over the army.

Venables was instructed to concentrate his army at Portsmouth and embark it on Penn's fleet for transportation to Barbados. Once there he was to recruit further forces upon the advice of the commissioners (or any two of them) 'as shal be found necessary for the better carrying on of this designe'. Such recruits were to be raised by 'meanes as you ... shal judge most convenient and expeditious', in such numbers as he saw fit either 'taken with you upon your first attempt, or to follow later', and he was authorised to recruit from any of the English islands in the Americas. Venables was informed that 'the designe in General is to gain an Interest in that part of the West Indies in the possession of the Spaniard' though he was not to be tied to any specific plan, three options having been discussed at the highest levels of government which he ought to consider. The first option was to attack one of the main Caribbean Islands such as Hispaniola, St. John's (Puerto Rico) or Cuba. San Domingo, the principle settlement of Hispaniola, was deemed 'not being considerably fortifyed may probably be possest without much difficulty' whilst St. John's Island, though suggested, elicited no comment as to its ease of capture. Once either of these two strategically located islands were occupied Venables was told, 'Many English wil come thither from other parts' and the islands would become a base for further expansion or places of retreat if necessary. From here an attack upon Havana would be feasible which was described as 'the back doore of the West Indies' whose capture would severely 'obstruct the passing of the Spaniards Plate Fleete into Europe', and as such Venables was to give this worthy consideration.[65]

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[61] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.109–110.

[62] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.21–27.

[63] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.111–115.

[64] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.21–22.

An alternative strategy was proposed to Venables based on Modyford's suggestions that he should attack first the Spanish Main between the 'River Orinoque and Porto Bello, aymeing chiefly at Cartagena' which would be the main objective. Seizing this vital port city would make the English 'master of the Spanyards Trasure' as would the occupation of Panama or Porto Bello. As the land in this part of the Spanish empire was already settled and planted the English could take advantage of the resources already available, and could exploit the indigenous population for their benefit and obtain supplies and money locally for the army's use. The third option was a combination of the first two, whereby one of the major islands was captured and used as base to attack Cartagena.[66]

Venables' instructions then reiterated that he was to discuss strategy with the commissioners and 'others as you shal thinke fit to advise with who have a particular knowledge of those parts' and that 'you and the said Commissioners, or any two of them, shal seeme most effectual'. He was informed that Penn had been separately informed that he and the fleet were to provide assistance to transport the army and assist with military support as needed. The General was required to notify the government in England on a regular basis the details of all resolutions agreed upon by the commissioners, that all prizes were to be disposed of by the commissioners for the benefit of the State, and that he had the authority, with the advice of any two of the commissioners, to establish garrisons and forts as required. He also had the authority to treat with and settle reasonable conditions 'to such persons as will submit to our government, and willingly come under our Obedience', and he was either to send prisoners back to England or dispose of them locally as he thought fit. His instructions concluded by stating that 'most things must be left to your prudent and discreet management as Occurences may arise upon the place, or from time to time fal out', but was again warned to act:

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[65] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.111–112.

[66] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.112–113.

> by advise eyther with the said Commissioners or your Councel of War as occassion may be, to Order and dispose of the forces under your Command as may be most advantageous for the publique, and for obtaining the ends for which these Forces were raysed, making it your special care in discharge of that great trust comitted to you that the Commonwealth receive no detriment.[67]

William Penn's instructions were equally lengthy but less concerned with strategy and more with the practical support the fleet needed to provide and operating procedures. He was to embark Venables' army and to use 'the utmost care, in transporting the soldiers, to prevent sickness among them' and carry them to Barbados where further recruits were to be raised, which he was required to transport as well. He was informed that the reasons for the expedition had previously been 'expressed in our instructions to General Venables, which he is to communicate to you' and he was required 'by the advice of the said commissioners, or any three of you, do your utmost endeavours to promote the service upon all occasions'. He was authorised to 'seize, and take all ships and vessels whatsover belonging to the King of Spaine … and, in case of resistance, you are authorised to sink, burn and destroy, all such ships and vessels.' Upon the agreement of any two of the commissioners he was empowered to land any of the English forces 'upon any of the dominions and possessions of the King of Spain in America'. Any prizes obtained were to be delivered to the commissioners, without embezzlement, for disposal for the benefit of the State. Furthermore he was authorised to seize any vessel 'to whomsoever belonging, which you, in your judgment, shall find necessary in order to the said service, giving them reasonable satisfaction for the same'. He was also encouraged to attack and seize any vessels encountered belonging to the kingdom of France, whilst also he was granted the power to issue letters of marque or reprisal against French ships. He was to ensure discipline was enforced throughout the fleet and to notify the government in England of proceedings of the fleet frequently. As with Venables he was expected to show 'prudent and discreet management as occurences may arise upon the place, or from time to time fall out'. As a final instruction he was instructed to split the fleet into two flotillas so that those vessels already laden could depart immediately and the remainder follow when ready.[68]

Despite Modyford's suggestion that a supreme commander be appointed it is clear that Venables lacked this complete authority and was to seek counsel and agreement from his fellow commissioners where the major actions of the expedition were concerned. Despite this it is clear that Venables had sole command of the army and although he was necessitated to seek agreement from the other commissioners regarding policy it was he, and he alone, that had responsibility for handling and deployment of the army. As sensible as it was not to force any prearranged plan of action upon both commanders and the other commissioners, the lack of a supreme commander was a major flaw and was to be a significant hindrance when the West Indies were reached. Consensus decision making in matters of war rarely works and whilst Cromwell wanted civilians to have a significant input in the decision-making process, it led to interference which, if Venables is to be believed, resulted in the defeat on Hispaniola. Despite five commissioners being appointed only four accompanied the expedition once it left Barbados, so the effectiveness of the structure was immediately diminished which was not helped by the ineffectiveness of Butler. With Winslow's premature death and the departure of Penn, Venables and Butler, command of the expedition as mandated by Cromwell collapsed, as there were no new commissioners available to replace them. Even though Sedgwick, Brayne and Stokes were all later appointed to these roles there was never a time when a quorum was ever present on Jamaica that could validate decisions made once the initial commissions had left in 1655. The three new appointees all died quickly after their arrival anyway, and with their deaths no new commissioners were ever appointed and so governance of the remnants of the expedition was in a legal void until the Restoration, much to the frustration of the army officers left to govern Jamaica as best they could.

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[67] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.112–115.

[68] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.23–27.

For the cash-strapped English government financing this expedition was always going to be problematic, at least in the short term, although it was expected by Cromwell that it would more than pay for itself once the treasure of South America was captured. Despite this, on 28 August the Council of State read and approved an establishment for the pay of the 'forces intended for the special service' amounting to 6,514*l* 13s 4d per month to begin 4 September. This excluded the amount of '6*l* a day to be allowed to Col. Venables, commander-in-chief of the said forces.'[69] On 2 September the Council of State discussed, and approved to 'settle part of 30,000*l* for payment of forces intended for special service.'[70] On 17 October the Council of State ordered that an establishment 'for a special service' be prepared along with a draft ordinance for an allocation of 30,000*l* 'for the use of the forces appointed thereunto' be prepared.[71] Perhaps not surprisingly there were some within the Government who believed that providing such an enormous quantity of supplies would lead to problems. An October 1654 report from the Admiralty Commissioners to 'the Lord Protector and Council of State' warned that the Admiralty was 'finding ourselves under many pressures and straights, in respect of the service', and that 'the Navy had run into debt ... which occasioned exceeding great clamour of many creditors upon them.' The burden of provisioning Penn's 'present fleet, will so exhaust the naval stores that there will be little remaining for future emergencies, or for supply of the fleet in case of any casualty'. Furthermore, 'the State's credit is so far hazarded that the stores cannot be supplied without ready money'. The report ended:

> These things and the exceeding great concernment of the fleet in the present undertaking induce this representation. We have daily wrestled with all manner

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[69] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.339

[70] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.361.

[71] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.376.

> of difficulties to carry on the service without giving your Highness and Council interruption, but finding the burden itself, in respect of the greatness of the employment, very weighty, the clamour and discontents of great numbers of persons incessantly importunate much more irksome, and especially fearing, and not without grounds, that the work in our hands will fail for want of necessary matter to carry it on, we dare do no less than tender the same to his Highness and Council, beseeching them to consider and seasonably provide, so that we may be encouraged to proceed in the service.[72]

Despite this warning from the Admiralty the expedition went ahead.

However, with money in such short supply, the Government was forced to seek private loans to provide the 'ready money' needed. On 8 November the Council of State was informed that Martin Noell agreed to advance the amount of 16,000*l* 'at the instance of the Protector and Council for the fleet and forces'. Of this, 12,000*l* was to be repaid from future excise receipts whilst the remainder was to come from money already apportioned for Ireland.[73] On 2 December 17,000*l* of the initial 30,000*l* allocation was ordered by the Council to be sent to Portsmouth 'for pay and contingencies of the forces'.[74] However, of this only 13,000*l* was spent and the remainder returned to London after the fleet had sailed.[75]

The amount of equipment and supplies needed for such an expedition was enormous. The organising committee had been asked to identify what would be required in the way of stores and provisions, and as early as 14 August 1654 had identified what food the fleet would need to carry with it. They recommended that the expedition take with it:

> Bisket for eight months.
>
> Beer three months; and in lieu of five months beer, more to be put on board of arrack or brandy for six weeks; and beverage, wine, vinegar, and cyder for fourteen weeks
>
> Beef four months of the old store, two months to be new provided.
>
> Pork six months of what is already made.
>
> Pease for eight months.
>
> Fish six weeks haberdine [salted and dried cod], ten weeks stock-fish, and in lieu of sixteen weeks fish more the value thereof to be put on board in oatmeal, rice and pease, butter
>
> three months in kind, and five months oil in lieu of butter.
>
> Cheese three months of Suffolk, and three months Cheshire, the other two months to be supplied in oil.
>
> The flour, raisins, and necessaries, as already ordered; and for the use of the forces at least 100 tons of bay salt.[76]

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[72] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.388.

[73] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.393.

[74] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.404.

[75] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1655*, p.21.

[76] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 4, p.542.

In October the Admiralty Commissioners submitted an estimate to the Council of State for the cost of the food requirements for 3,000 men for 28 days, though presumably this was just for the fleet and excluded the army's needs. In this they recommended that each man be allowed one pound of biscuit, one bottle of beer, one pound of beef and one pint of peas for three days of the week and on the other four days one pound of biscuit, one bottle of beer, one quarter pound of butter and half a pound of Cheshire cheese. This amounted, in weight, to slightly more than 300 tonnes of provisions for 3,000 men for one month.[77] When the fleet departed in December it had over 9,000 sailors and soldiers on board and so would have needed to carry around 900 tonnes of provisions for just the one month voyage to Barbados, let alone provisions for beyond that first month. It is doubtful anywhere near this quantity was actually shipped.

A sailor's ditty from the 1670s perhaps gives a fair indication of the provisions received by the sailors when aboard their ships and no doubt the men of 1654 could relate to this:

> Our beef and pork is very scant,
> I'm sure of weight, one half it want:
> Our bread is black, and maggots in it crawl,
> That's all the fresh meat we are fed withal.
> When we these things to Sir John Harman[78] say,
> Our purser mends the matter for a day,
> Thinking to make us weary of complaining,
> But he upon our bellies still is gaming;
> A little rice we get instead of fish,
> Which to you well is known, but a poor dish,
> Except good spice to put in it you had,
> For with a good sauce a deal board is not bad.
> Our drink is but vinegar and water,
> Four-shilling beer in England's ten times better,
> So that when sailors get good wine,
> They think themselves in Heaven for the time.[79]

Exactly what quantity of victuals the expedition was planning to take with them is unknown. Riccard's committee evidently felt that eight months provisions were required to be sent with the fleet when they reported to Cromwell on 14 August.[80] An undated budget prepared by the committee, probably drawn up before the expedition departed, was based on providing supplies for an army of 6,000 men.[81] According to Venables, before accepting his commission he demanded that the expedition be fully provisioned

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[77] TNA, SP18/76, Council of State: Letters and Papers, 1654, f.213.

[78] An English admiral who had served in the Commonwealth Navy throughout the 1650s.

[79] Quoted in Arthur Finley Scott, *Every one a witness: The Stuart Age* (New York: Crowell, 1975), pp.285–286.

[80] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 4, p.542.

[81] The Bodleian Library Oxford, A Vol. 57, Rawlinson Collection, 1658, ff.8–15.

'suitable to the design and the distance of the place, Supplies not being to be had Suddenly, and therefore must carry the more with us, lest when we come to work we should be forc'd to stand still through want of necessaries to carry on the Service.' Venables said he was offered 10 months' provisions for 10,000 men, but he soon realised that these would not be forthcoming. He personally informed Desborough of his concerns of the lack and 'unsoundness of the Provisions', for he 'had the care of the Fleet to see it well furnished'. Venables later claimed that Desborough was so incensed by his comments that the two publicly quarrelled, with Desborough accusing Venables of seeking 'to hinder the design'. When Venables enquired of a friend why Desborough reacted so violently he was informed that 'Tho' Gen' Desbrow was no Victualler, yet it was believed upon very strong presumptions he had a share in the profit of the provisioning.'[82] Given the general lack of money available at the time it is likely that less was actually procured than was deemed necessary to be sent and so a shortage of provisions was always likely to occur, even before some of the supply ships failed to sail with the main fleet.

Riccard's committee had been extremely thorough in attempting to envisage exactly what the expedition would need. Their report provided an itemised list under various headings including provisions, ammunition, artillery, pioneers and planter's provisions, nails as well as household wares, stationary, fishing and medical supplies. In total they estimated the cost to provide sufficient supplies for an army of 6,000 men at 37,316*l* 19s, a figure that would no doubt have made Cromwell gasp for he was convinced the expedition could be sent at minimal cost.[83] The government lacked the funds to finance the expedition on this scale and inevitably many of the committee's recommendations were ignored, but they made a few suggestions that deserve some comment. Canvas jackets and drawers were recommended for each of the soldiers for the voyage out and whilst there is no evidence that each man was provided with these as standard issue, Penn noted that he did issue some to the army from his own naval stores and Doyley certainly issued them on Jamaica from time to time.[84] There is also no evidence that the army was issued with red coats before it left England, but the committee certainly suggested that each man be issued with one (plus an additional 1,000 for the seamen should they be landed), and interestingly they also recommended each soldier be issued with a red waistcoat. They recommended 1,000 tents be issued and some certainly were, but they were loaded onto the store ships that were delayed leaving England and they were to be sorely missed.[85] The committee recommended 1,000 matchlock muskets be provided with 1,000 long-pikes and 1,000 three-quarter pikes which is the exact number issued by the Ordnance Office. Only 3,000 of the suggested 6,000 swords and belts were issued but the entire recommended quantity of 1,000 barrels of powder was provided.[86] It cannot be said that the committee's recommendations were totally ignored, as it is clear that some attempt was made to provide what had been suggested, even if limited space and finances led to the inevitable compromises. Crucially the committee had also envisaged the need for the soldiers to carry water when they suggested that 1,000 leather water bottles be issued to the army. As will shortly be seen, the neglect of this particular recommendation was to have dire consequences.

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[82] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.4–5.

[83] The Bodleian Library Oxford, A Vol. 57, ff.8–15.

[84] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.57; F.J. Osborne and S.A.G. Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', *The Jamaican Historical Review*, Vol. X, 1973, p.90; F.J. Osborne and S.A.G. Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part Two', *The Jamaican Historical Review*, Vol. XI, 1978, pp.95, 83, 115.

[85] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.48.

The rush to get the fleet to sea before the close of 1654 meant that Venables and Penn sailed without some of their supply ships, hoping that these would catch them up. Unfortunately they did not arrive until Jamaica had been reached by which time the army had been reduced to a dismal condition. With the expedition short of provisions it became necessary to purchase provender in Barbados, mainly from stock previously forwarded to the colony by the victuallers of the navy. Without this Venables wondered 'how we should [have] subsisted when gone hence'. He was later questioned as to why his army dallied so long on Barbados before attacking Hispaniola, giving the Spanish time to prepare. Venables replied that he was reluctant to sail from there until his store ships arrived. For 10 weeks, he claimed, the English awaited their arrival fearing 'some trouble in England that might possibly hinder; we fear'd the danger of the Sea also, but it did appear that it was God's own handy work to prevent our Store Ships from Coming to us.' With great reluctance Venables sailed from Barbados without them. He needed to capture Hispaniola before the rains came but after also 'having almost eaten both them and our small stores (that came with us) up, and so could not stay longer for them, lest we had perish'd ourselves and destroyed the Plantations'. Commenting on the quality of the provisions available in Barbados Venables claimed that 'It is true the Provisions were bad, so that they were refused by the Fleet in England, and therefore sent by the Victuallers of the Navy to Barbadoes to be Sold; which we were forced to buy rather than starve, being our own Stores came not to us, preferring bad food to none.'[87]

In an attempt to preserve what provisions remained when the English left Barbados, an order was given that all boys accompanying the fleet 'be cancelled out of the states books' to receive neither food nor pay, though no care was made for their transport home. This heartless act was purely based on economy, to safeguard what little supplies remained, though one observer noted that this act '(if it be not treason to speak it) might have been more seasonably performed at home.'[88] The shortage of supplies inevitably led to a reduction in the men's rations after re-embarking at Barbados although Venables later claimed that the seamen continued to have their 'Victuals with Brandy and the Landmen had only Bread (and that most beastly rotten), and water'. Penn, however, did dictate to the fleet on 6 February that for 'the lengthening out of the victuals' the men's daily provisions be reduced so

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[86] TNA, WO49/87, Ordnance Office: Debenture Books, 1654–1655, f.53.

[87] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.8, 43, 93, 13.

[88] T. Park (ed.), *A Brief and Perfect Journal ... of the English Army in the West Indies ... by I.S.*, Vol. 6 (London: Robert Dutton, 1810), p.378.

'that six should come to four men's allowance throughout the whole fleet'.[89] The overall effect was the reduction of the fighting efficiency of the men, so much so that many are recorded as collapsing in the water upon landing on Hispaniola. Rear Admiral Goodsonn remarked upon the soldiers' weakness, 'that the fortnights weakening at Sea with bad Provisions would not be recovered with two Months good diet on Land'.[90] As will be demonstrated later, this lack of provisioning was to reduce the English to extremities.

Whilst some food could be acquired in Barbados and wherever the army eventually landed the stores the army and fleet needed to fight with was a different matter. Everything needed to be carried with them as there was nowhere that they could be acquired once the Caribbean was reached. All the English colonies relied upon getting their stores from England as well and so little assistance could likely be provided from them, and whilst New England could be a source of provision it was still a lengthy return voyage from the Caribbean and so could not be relied upon for replenishment. As such, much thought was given by the organisers as to what needed to be brought from England. Obviously the army needed weapons and ammunition, as well as clothing, shoes and a myriad of other necessities. The fleet needed the same plus extra sails, masts, ropes and other sailing paraphernalia in sufficient quantities not just to get it to the West Indies, but to maintain it there and get it home later. In addition to this the English would need copious tools and building materials to construct shelter, accommodation and defences once they arrived.

Thomas Modyford, when asked for his opinion as to what supplies the expedition would require in early 1654, optimistically wrote:

> 1. I would have a fleet strong enough to beat the Spanish armado; and let the frigats be good sailors, such as will stand nearest the wind; for which purpose the keels should be sharp and deep; let them be well victualled, the beef well salted, and the beer well boil'd ; for we have found it by experience, that it is the corrupt victuals, not the climate, that causeth sickness.
> 2. Let not too many soldiers be put upon a vessel, to prevent pestering; and if posible, let the men be taken aboard at Plymouth or Falmouth.
> 3. Let your ships have double rigging, tackle, and sails, &c. for the voyage is long, and we have no supplies in these parts.
> 4. Let there be 100 good wherries, which you at London call light horsemen, and some 6 oar barges, which will be of very great use in the river, to fetch up the Indians canoes and pereagoas, which proved very advantageous to the colony at Surinam.
> 5. Let the land soldiers be provided with musket and pike and other defensive arms, as if you were to attempt France, Spain, or Italy, for the country is not hotter than either; but that a man may endure the carriage of arms here, as well as there. Let there be a good train of artillery, granadoes, petards, and other fireworks, and also engineers, and all other necessary officers of that kind.

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[89] Penn, *Memorials*, p.67.

[90] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.13.

> 6. Let there be arms for 1000 horse, and for two companies of curassiers [*sic*] complete.
> 7. Their clothing may be shirts, shoes, and drawers; and it would do well, if you did buy hammocks for them, which come from you; which I understand may be had about Bristol. For these in the Indies take no care, for they are already provided with them.
> 8. Be sure to have enough of mattocks, shovels, spades, pick-axes, wheelbarrows, axes, carpenters, coopers, and masons tools; saws of all sorts, and the like.[91]

A much more comprehensive list of equipment needed to be provided for the fleet was also submitted to Cromwell in August by Riccard and his fellow committee members, and provides a fascinating insight into what was deemed by the committee to be necessary to be carried with the English when they departed.[92]

By mid November the process of raising the army and equipping it was under way. The Ordnance Office, based at the Tower of London, fulfilled the chief role to procure, store and then distribute arms and ammunition to both the navy and the army. Desborough was given the responsibility to oversee the issuance of supplies, but both the Council of State and Cromwell himself sent orders for materials to be issued, creating some unnecessary confusion, as they bypassed the traditional processes of the Admiralty and the Army Committee submitting their requests to the Ordnance Office, who would then arrange and deliver to the nominated recipients.[93]

As early as 19 October Desborough was issuing orders to the Ordnance Office for equipment. On that day he and Penn ordered 'foure thousand Collars of Bandalleeres … and three thousand powder baggs according to ye pattron [*sic*] lately shewn us by them in leure [*sic*] of ye 4000 hornes formerly Ordered for ye present Expedition.'[94] Whilst on 24 October the Committee of the Admiralty and Navy ordered the officers of the Ordnance Office to 'furnish each of ye three flagg shipps of Generall Penns Squadron with twelve setes of Armour of proofe for ye use of ye present Expedicon'. On 13 November 1654 Desborough ordered a significant quantity of weaponry from the Ordnance Office, presumably from stocks held at the Tower of London. This included 1,000 long pikes, 1,000 half-pikes, 1,000 matchlock muskets, 1,000 snaphaunce muskets, 250 carbines, 3,000 swords, 3,000 belts, 150 pistols with holsters, 100 'Back Breast & pots', 2,000 horseshoes with 30,000 nails, 3,000 powder bags, 2,000 bandoliers, five ton of match 'in dry fats [*sic*]', 10 tons of 'fflint stones', 1,000 barrels of gunpowder, 10 ton of 'Musqt shot', six small drakes 'wth shod Carriages', four 'Batteringe peeces', two mortars with 200 shells, seven tons of various lead, 30 dozen 'Ballast Basket' and 40 wheelbarrows.[95] Three days later 1,000 'Swede Feathers' were requested and the day after that 'one Whole Cannon and one Dj [demi] Can[non]' were also ordered 'to bee in a readiness to be sent aboard Genll Penns squadron.'[96] On 17 November Cromwell personally instructed the Ordnance Office to deliver to Venables:

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[91] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.63.

[92] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 4, pp.571–574.

[93] For details on the administrative workings of the Ordnance Office and the various Admiralty committees see Andrew Derek Thrush, 'The Navy Under Charles I' (PhD Dissertation, University College London, 1991, pp.299–331; Bernard Capp, *Cromwell's Navy: The Fleet and the English Revolution 1648–1660* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); David Ernest Lewis, 'The Office of Ordnance and the Parliamentarian land forces, 1642–1648' (PhD, Loughborough University of Technology, 1976).

[94] TNA, WO49/87, f.51.

> fifty Ensignes or Cullors and one hundred and two Drumes and one hundred Holberts [*sic*] and fifty partisans for ye five Regiments appointed for ye Service in this present Expedicon at Sea and two Trumpets and Banners for ye Trumpetters that are to attend Col Vennables ... and you are also to give Order for ye delyvey [*sic*] of 260 Musqtts and one hundred Pikes unto Coll Heane.

On 13 January 1655 a payment of 2*l* 2s was made for 'one Orange Cullr ... for ye Service of ye Fources under ye Command of Genll Venables.'[97]

The whole cannon and demi-cannon issued on 18 November needed a substantial supply of ammunition and equipment to go with them. The cannon was provided with 300 round shot, as well as two ladles and two sponges. The demi-cannon some 900 round shot, six ladles and 12 sponges. Also 1,800 3lb bullets were issued along with 200 'Tynn Cases'. In addition this train of artillery was issued with a multitude of tools including 20 wood[en] hooks, 100 ells of canvas, 20 reams of 'Paper royall', two doglock guns, 20 'ffield Tamoones', 150 horse harnesses, two sets of tools each for a smith, a carpenter and a wheelwright. Also issued were 12lbs of thread, 12 dozen needles, 20lb of twine, three dozen powder horns, two dozen linstocks, four dozen priming irons, 20lbs of starch, three 'Bourne hydes', six 'Hare Clothes' and four dozen sheepskins.[98]

Before many of the weapons were dispatched from the Tower they were cleaned and repaired, if necessary, a process that cost 10d for a matchlock, 12d for each snaphaunce musket and 2s for a pistol. On 14 and 15 November alone 44 pistols, 132 matchlock muskets and 164 snaphaunce muskets were cleaned at a cost of 50*l* 1s 8d.[99] On 9 December 15 blunderbusses were 'washed within oyled & fixed' at a cost of 11d per piece, whilst a fowling piece was 'made Cleane' at a cost of 1s 6d.[100] Despite the efforts made to clean and repair the weapons Venables was to later claim that of those issued, 'half their arms were defective and altogether unserviceable'.[101]

In early December the Council of State ordered 'a further addicon [*sic*] of Armes and Stores to those already provided' be made ready for the expedition. These included items such as 'Steele spades', threescore handspikes, 12 'Darke Lanthornes', two pairs of callipers, four 'Great Iron Ladles', four petards, brass skillets for 'ye fire Master', a set of 'Shott gages [*sic*]', a pair of scales and a set of weights 'for ye Gunnr', one ton of carbine bullet, one ton of pistol bullet, a 'Mold or 2 for birding Shott', 100 handbarrows, a hundredweight of saltpetre, 50 pound of 'sulphine', a 'barrell of pitch', plus '3 large molds one for Muskett, one for Carbine and one for pistoll' and 20 scaling ladders. A further 500 long-pikes, 500 snaphaunce muskets, 500 matchlock muskets, 150 'pistolls wth holsters', five ton of match, 2,000 snapsacks as well as 'Drum heads and Cords fifteen dozen' were also ordered.[102]

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[95] TNA, WO49/87, f.53.

[96] TNA, WO49/87, f.54.

[97] TNA, WO49/87, f.55; TNA, WO49/87, f.97.

[98] TNA, WO49/87, f.56.

[99] TNA, WO49/87, ff.46–50.

[100] TNA, WO49/87, f.70.

[101] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.54.

Despite the number of pikes issued (at least 2,000) the English army was still short of them. Once Barbados was reached the army requested the fleet to supply a further 600 pikes and 200 half-pikes. Despite this shortage the fleet only dispatched a few half-pikes, though Penn 'had many hundred of Pikes in the Fleet to spare', or so Venables believed. This shortfall was rectified by the manufacture of half-pikes in Barbados (half-pikes because 'the Timber of that countrey not being fit for long ones').[103] The carpenters of the island were ordered 'to make pikes, and the smiths to head them; they were promised payment for their labour, and I think they were accordingly satisfied honestly; but for firearms we took them where we could find them, without giving any satisfaction to the owners.'[104] Modyford claims 2,500 pikes were made 'in the several parishes.'[105] In a letter these pikes are described as: 'half-pikes, though at a larger length than ordinary, for they are ten foot long; many of them (which may cause you wonder) are made of cabage stalks, I mean of the trees in Barbados, which bear cabages, and that for lack better wood.' These pikes 2,500 in number, despite their inferior quality of wood 'prov'd very useful'. Venables was to later comment regarding the poor quality of these pikes, that 'I suppose Tom Tinker and Tom a Bedlam in England marches with better Weapons.'[106]

Alexander and Norm, coopers, on 21 November 1654 were paid 3*l* 15s to provide 50 'Powder barrells' for the fleet plus a further 6*l* 2s for 61 labour for a 'Dayes worke'. The widow Sara Ward also provided 510 'Tinn Cases for Saker' at a cost of 3s each, 27 ladles for culverins at a cost of 10s 2d each as well as 10 spare sponges for sakers at a cost of 2s apiece. Three thousand flints were purchased for the snaphaunce muskets at a cost of 13s 4d per 1,000. Two thousand 'Snapsackes' were purchased for 8d each, whilst 60 'Powder bagges' were purchased for 4s each. Seven 'new fowleing peecis [*sic*] cost 23s each. Linseed oil, turpentine and 'Spirit of Wine' were all purchased for the fleet, for 4d a pint whilst beeswax was also purchased at a cost of 14d a pound.[107]

On 13 November 1,000 barrels of gunpowder were issued to the expedition.[108] A further 713 had been delivered to the fleet by 19 December. This last consignment was distributed throughout the fleet thus:

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[102] TNA, SP25/53, Council of State: Draft Order Books, 1654–1655, f.15.

[103] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.43.

[104] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.572.

[105] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.621.

[106] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.12.

[107] TNA, WO49/87, ff.52, 70, 76, 78, 92.

[108] TNA, WO49/87, f.53.

Ship	**Barrels**
The Gloucester	20
Gillyflower	30
Gouldon Falcon	10
Cardiffe	12
Armes of Holland	10
Hound	117
Falmouth	120
Tulipp	12
Heart's Ease	12
Halfemoone	340
Falcon Nyboate	30
Total	713[109]

On the subject of gunpowder Venables wrote to the Council of State from Barbados asking for more to which request he added an interesting note:

> Its agreed upon by all those persons that know America, the English Powder will not keep above Nine Months, and at that time we must receive constant Supplies. French and Spanish Powder will keep many years. Therefore I earnestly desire Salt Petre and all other Materials, Men to make Powder maybe sent to us: for the Ingredients will keep uncompounded very well.[110]

One item not mentioned in any of the extant accounts of the provisions issued for the expedition were water bottles (although the Navy Committee did instruct that each vessel was to carry 150 tons of water each).[111] Issue of water bottles had been recommended by Riccard's committee but there is no record that any were. It was their inability to carry fresh water once landed on Hispaniola that left the English faint from thirst and unable to defend themselves from the lurking Spanish. Venables wrote from Jamaica to Edward Montague (later 1st Earl of Sandwich but in 1655 a commissioner of the Treasury) that the Spanish on Hispaniola had two defences: 'overgrown woods and [the English] want of water'. He added that, 'whoever comes into these parts must bring leather-bottles, which are more needful here than knapsacks in *Ireland*.'[112]

Numerous payments were made in the days before the fleet sailed for supplies and for services provided to get the fleet ready for sea. One supplier of the Ordnance Office, Henry Cossel, provided two wooden quadrants at 5s each, 200 fuses for 18½ inch mortars at 6d a piece whilst the 200 he sold for 15½ inch mortars cost 5d a piece. He also supplied 400 'Handgranadoe fuses' for 10d per dozen, as well two mixing bowls at 15s each, two long linstocks for 12d a piece and four 'Great Tynn Funnells' for 3s each.[113] An unnamed navy supplier was paid 10*l* 'for hus dyett and Travelling Charges in taking an accompt of ye gunners stores at Gennll Penns Squadron of Shipps at Portsmo[uth] and supplying the Defects of them.' Another was paid 7*l* 11s 3d 'for Carrying 20 Coyle of tard rope for Tackles from Southwarke to Portsmo[uth] by land' whilst John Merry was paid 9*l* 19s 1d 'for so much by him layed out and disbursed for hireing of Labourers extraordinary to dispach [*sic*] away ye provissions [*sic*] for Genll: Penns Squadron'. William Dyke, master of the vessel *William of London* was paid 13*l* 2s for 'ye primage and Averidge [an archaic term for loading and unloading a vessel]' of 143 tons and six and a half hundredweight of 'chests of Musquetts, Pistolls Carbines piggs of Lead and other provisions of war'.[114] John Clarke, owner of the hoy called the *John of London* was paid 2*l* for carrying cargo from 'ye Tower wharfe on board ye Shipps W[illia]m and Morning Starr ryding at Ratcliff and Wappin'.[115] Whilst Edward Thorpe, master of another hoy was paid 1*l* 15s for carrying two 'Cannon of brass' from Woolwich on his boat. One was delivered to the *Recovery* and the other to the *William* at Wapping.[116] Samuel Boulton was paid 2*l* for his 'lighter being employed in carying two Lighters full of provisions from ye Tower, ye one on board ye Recovery merchant ryding at Wappin and ye other on board ye Edward Merchant at Ratcliff'.[117] The navy sent its storekeeper, John Faulkner Esquire, to Portsmouth in early December to 'take an accompt of ye gunners stoares of Genll Penns squadron' for which he was to receive 5*l* for 'his diett & travelling Charges' for the three days he was there. He was assisted by William Moore, who had gone ahead on 22 November to start the stock check for which he was paid 6*l* for his expenses and his clerk, Richard Marbury, who was paid 9*l*.[118] Francis Cranwell, a prominent navy administrator, seems to have been responsible for ensuring the vessels were in a seaworthy condition and for repairing defects. He spent 1*l* 5s for the carriage of ballast to the fleet, 11*l* 18s 6d for 'Carpenters & Laborers', 12s 6d for a 'blocke for Riggins'. To a ropemaker he paid 87*l* 15s for '2 Cables and hoiser [hawser] & other riggins' and 1*l* 5s for 'making of a new fore Coarse [*sic*] Mizzen & mending her after Sailes'. He purchased three wooden boyes for 11s and paid 5s for 'Carrying o Rigging and Sayles ashore & aboard againe', plus a further 8s for 12 sheepskins.[119]

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[109] BL, Add MS 70100 Portland Papers, 1640–1696. See also HMC, The manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland, 13th Report Appendix Part Two, Vol. 2 (London: HMSO, 1891), p.88.

[110] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.9.

[111] TNA, SP18/91, Admiralty Committee and Navy Commissioners' Papers, 1654, f.1.

[112] T. Carte (ed.), *A Collection of original letters and papers, concerning the affairs of England, from the year 1641 to 1660. Found among the Duke of Ormonde's papers*, Vol. 2 (London: Society for the Encouragement of Learning, 1739), p.50.

One item that is missing from all the extant records relating to supplying the army is any mention of the soldiers being issued with uniforms. It was most likely expected that the officers were required to purchase their own, but for the common soldiers it was normal that they would be provided with one. A lack of uniforms does not seem to been an issue amongst the English army in general throughout the Protectorate and so it can be assumed the army did wear a uniform (of sorts) when it left England. Whether it was newly issued or if the men retained the uniforms of their previous regiment (for those not newly raised) cannot be ascertained. However, the army was certainly issued with uniforms at different times during 1656 in Jamaica.

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[113] TNA, WO49/87, f.88.
[114] TNA, WO49/87, ff.76, 65, 75, 99.
[115] TNA, WO49/87, f.75.
[116] TNA, WO49/87, f.74.
[117] TNA, WO49/87, f.75.
[118] TNA, WO49/87, f.71.
[119] TNA, SP18/91, f.142.

Desborough was personally present in Portsmouth in November and December to oversee the final preparations and embarkation of the forces. He wrote to Cromwell on 27 November:

> This day being faire, hath put a little life into our businesse againe; and if the Lord please to send us faire weather, I hope by saturday night we shall have twelve or fourteen sayle ready, which will carry 1200 souldiers at least with them ... If the Lord please to blesse our endeavours, I hope the next weeke may doe much to the whole affaire. I long to get from this place. I beg, that your highnesse would give order in relation to instructions, that there may be no stay for them. I have no more...[120]

Desborough in Portsmouth was assisted by Captain Francis Willoughby, who did much of the co-ordination of procuring and loading of the supplies on to the fleet.[121]

Desborough was optimistic, though, for there was still lots to be done. By 2 December only some of the vessels had been loaded with provisions and even these were still lacking water. The following day he was able to confirm that he had the *Torrington* and its squadron ready and so it was decided that they would depart first for Barbados. Desborough suggested that Heane's and Fortescue's regiments be loaded on these vessels and between them they could manage 'what should be necessary in Barbadoes'. However, both regiments were still awaiting their officers to arrive. Four days later they were still waiting for them to arrive 'which is no small trouble to me, considering the winde is now faire'. Desborough claimed further that, 'The remainder of the fleet are neer ready, the greatest want being the water-caske, which cometh from London'. Even as late as 12 December Desborough was seeking to obtain '650 more hammocks ... and send them speedily to Portsmouth' but this request was only approved by Council of State on 19 December and so they were unlikely to have arrived before the fleet sailed.[122]

On 2 December, as Desborough was trying desperately to get the fleet ready and loaded, the Council of State was still authorising the dispatch of further supplies to Portsmouth. A week later personnel were also still being appointed to fill roles on Venables' staff, when a certain Mr. Fletcher was 'appointed storekeeper to the special service'. A likely cause of the delay in officers arriving, which Desborough constantly complained about, was that they had not been paid and so there was a rush to get the officers paid before they departed as it had been decided that upon embarkation each officer and soldier were to receive 30 days' pay. Thereafter, one quarter of their pay would be paid to each man every four months and 'all balance of moneys due to them to be paid on their return'. From their pay 'defalcations [deductions] for their clothes and victuals, to be made only at such rates as would be paid in England'. The Council of State, on 12 December, ordered that Robert Wadeson 'paymaster of the forces on special service' be given 30*l* advance, Captain Jones and his troop of horse were ordered to Portsmouth 'where order is taken for their pay'. Even Edward Winslow, one of the commissioners, was chasing an advance of 500*l* to be paid before leaving.[123]

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[120] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 4, p.740.

[121] TNA, SP18/91.

[122] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, pp.3–4, 12; Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.413.

With provisions, men and materiel descending on Portsmouth at the end of November and the first half of December, the scene was set for the departure of probably the most powerful military force to date that England had ever mustered for an overseas military venture. Despite the obvious chaos, confusion and inevitable delays, by Christmas 1654 most of the fleet with the army safely aboard was ready to sail.

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[123] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, pp.361, 410, 404.

3

The English Army in the West Indies 1654–1655

As the English army assembled Portsmouth in December 1654 Cromwell would have had every reason to believe this army would be adequate for the task at hand. The Parliamentarian army of the Civil War had been victorious since 1645. By now battled hardened, it had defeated the main Royalist forces at Naseby in 1645 and a host of other engagements before the end of the First Civil War. Since then it had crushed the multiple Royalist uprisings in England and Wales in 1648, it had easily overpowered the Irish rebels in 1649, it had defeated the Scottish army at Dunbar in 1650 and swept aside a joint Scottish–Royalist invasion at Worcester in 1651. Whilst still engaged in the occupation of both Ireland and Scotland it was able to dominate the limited opposition it was currently facing in both countries. Its reputation was such that both Spain and France were playing a game of high-stakes diplomacy to get a commitment from Cromwell to provide some of these soldiers in Europe to assist in the fight against each other. The army had defeated the Royalists, it had implemented a political revolution the like of which England had never seen before, and it maintained peace and stability in the country and was the force behind Cromwell's rise to power. Undefeated in over a decade, the army was confident that it would rise to the challenge of expanding English influence and possessions abroad.

In Robert Venables, Cromwell must have assumed he had the right commander. Seemingly a committed Parliamentarian, he had served in the army since 1642. He had exercised field commands in Lancashire during the First Civil War and had commanded garrisons at Tarvin and Chester. In Ireland he had commanded the English forces in Ulster for some years and demonstrated a capacity for independent command and had thus gained an enviable reputation within the army. His name frequently appeared in the various newsletters of the time and so he was a kin to a minor celebrity amongst the news-reading English public when he was appointed commander-in-chief of the army in 1654. Even though both the public and army were unaware of his specific target, as indeed he was, it is clear that great things were expected of him. Undoubtedly Cromwell had thought long and hard who he would appoint for this critical role. He needed experience, competence and a commander that could operate independently. Venables had demonstrated, albeit on a lesser scale, that he had these attributes and so it is all the more surprising that he failed so lamentably in this role once arriving in the West Indies. There were other, better commanders Cromwell could have chosen, such as Monck and a host of others, but these were either needed in Scotland or played political roles in England. Venables was experienced, seemingly loyal but also expendable.

The intention was to raise the nucleus of an army in England and to supplement this with recruits obtained in Barbados and other English possessions in the West Indies. Rather than select regiments by lots to be sent in their entirety (as had initially been the case with the army sent to Ireland in 1649) it was decided to draw out volunteers from the various regiments based around London in November 1654 and supplement these with newly raised, though not necessarily raw recruits before leaving England. On the face of it, given the experience of individual regiments, it would have made sense to transfer existing regiments into Venables' army rather than raise new ones. Most likely Cromwell had considered this and decided against it, unwilling to risk a confrontation with the selected regiments if they demanded payment of their arrears before agreeing to serve overseas, as had been the case in 1649 when the army for Ireland was assembled, or if they simply refused to serve abroad. Furthermore the army at its full establishment was needed to maintain their commitments in Ireland and Scotland, whilst guarding against the ever present threat of a Royalist uprising at home. As such it was deemed more practical to raise new formations, with recruits mainly from existing regiments of the standing army. This method was also utilised when the English army for Flanders was raised in 1657.[1]

The Council of State ordered on 16 November that 'the Colonels and other officers of the foot regiments from which any officers or soldiers are to be drawn for special service, to draw them out and deliver them to the officers employed on that service next Monday [20 November]'.[2] Thus the core of this new army was established on 20 November when men were drawn from four or five regiments then currently in and around London.[3] At this time the infantry regiments of the regular army in the vicinity of London were Cromwell's own, Richard Ingoldsby's, William Goffe's and John Lambert's, plus John Barkstead's regiment which formed the garrison of the Tower of London. It would seem likely that the nucleus was formed from the rank and file of these regiments whilst the officers were recruited from a variety of sources, although Goffe's and Cromwell's regiment provided at least some of the officers of Fortescue's regiment.[4] Venables was to later state at least some of his men came from 'the Tower Regiment', meaning John

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[1] See Sir Charles Harding Firth, 'Royalist and Cromwellian Armies in Flanders, 1657–1662', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society (New Series)*, Vol. 17, 1903.

[2] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD 1654* (London: Longmans & Co, 1880), p.397.

[3] TT, Henry Walker (ed.), *Certain Passages, 17 November–24 November 1654*, London, 40:E.236[24], p.112; TT, D. Border (ed.), *The Faithfull Scout, 17 November–24 November 1654*, no. 202, London, 40:E.236[25].

[4] Mary Anne Everett Green (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1655–6* (London: Longmans & Co., 1882), p.61.

Barkstead's regiment.[5] According to Venables the force that left England was already 500 men short of the number intended, but he was hopeful he would make up this shortage in Barbados.[6]

The army consisted of five regiments of foot and one troop of cavalry, along with a small train of artillery with its own company of firelocks. The infantry comprised the regiments of Robert Venables, Richard Heane, Richard Fortescue, Anthony Buller and Andrew Carter (Cromwell's instructions to the committee overseeing the preparations for the expedition stated in August 1654 that the army was to consist of six regiments and not five, but there is no evidence to suggest that a sixth was raised[7]). The troop of horse was commanded by Captain Henry Jones.[8] A unit of *reformadoes* was added prior to the departure of the army under the command of Captain Jennings.[9] There is no evidence that these *reformadoes* were intended to be mounted when they were formed and they certainly fought on foot in Hispaniola. An additional troop of horse, commanded by Captain Heane (son of Major General Heane) was also added in Barbados, as was a third troop under the command of Captain Philip Carpenter. These were needed as most of Jones' original troop was forced back to England after their departure by bad weather and so were not present with the army at Hispaniola or the initial occupation of Jamaica.[10]

Robert Venables' own regiment, especially raised for the expedition even though he was still the commanding officer of another regiment based in Ireland, consisted of the following companies in December 1654:[11]

General Robert Venables
Lieutenant Colonel Edward Doylie [Doyley][12]
Major Francis Mercer[13]
Captain George Butler[14]
Captain [Henry?] Carey[15]

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[5] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.6.

[6] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.6.

[7] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.107.

[8] W. Noel Sainsbury (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies. 1675-1676, Also Addenda 1574-674*, Vol. 9 (London: 1893), pp.90–91; TNA, CO1/32, Privy Council and related bodies: America and West Indies, Colonial Papers (General Series), Addenda., 1591–1656, ff.56–57.

[9] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.398.

[10] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.122; Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.325.

[11] Unless otherwise cited, the composition of Venables' army in December 1654 is based on the pay records found at TNA, CO1/32, ff.56–57.

[12] Appointed colonel of the regiment raised in Barbados in March 1655.

[13] Transferred to Doyley's new regiment in Barbados as lieutenant colonel.

[14] Brother of commissioner Gregory Butler. Killed 26 April 1655. See Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[15] Probably the Henry Carey who was appointed 'secretary to the expedition' on 12 December 1654. Only three soldiers from his company drew pay and he was not listed as a company commander at the March 1655 muster in Barbados. It is therefore assumed his tenure was short lived and he was replaced as company commander prior to the expedition departing, or shortly afterwards.

Captain John Cooke[16]
Captain Henry Davice [or Davis][17]
Captain Henry Disney[18]
Captain Thomas Handcock[19]
Captain George Persons [Parsons][20]
Captain Obadiah Hinde [Hind][21]

At a muster held by the entire army in Barbados on 21 March 1655 Carey and Davis had been replaced by captains Pawley and Paris.[22]

A total of 47 officers and 36 men belonging to Venables' regiment drew advance pay in December 1654. Other officers of the regiment prior to leaving England included Will Drew, the apothecary, the apostate Thomas Gage who was the regimental chaplain, Rich Dukenfield, the chirurgeon and his two assistants William Armstrong and Will Fisher. Four drummers (George Moore, John Booker, George Taylor and Edward Stenton) drew pay as did five ensigns (William Simons, Thomas Breres, Henry Ferroboscoe, James Burey and Robert Donn).[23]

The regiment lost many officers (and men) at Hispaniola and so it became necessary to commission new officers whilst still on the island. Robert Smith was appointed Major on 25 April (it is not clear whether was an officer in the regiment prior to his appointment) whilst on the same day William Wingbell, Edward Sackwell and Ralph Betts were all promoted to the rank of captain. Also commissioned that day was Henry Skepworth, ensign to Smith, and Ralph Swinerton was made lieutenant. Once Jamaica was reached a further set of commissions were issued. On 5 May Philip Ward was appointed lieutenant colonel of the regiment but again it is not known if he was in the regiment prior to this, but he may have been a *reformado* officer. On 10 May Henry Goddard was appointed ensign, as was Thomas Elendere(?), whilst Abraham Pegg was appointed captain and Thomas Ballard (later to command the regiment after Ward stepped down) was appointed as Major Smith's lieutenant. On 20 May Henry Ferroboscoe was appointed lieutenant to the newly appointed Captain Betts, whilst Henry Potter was made captain-lieutenant of Venables' own company and Robert Minshin was appointed ensign of the same company.[24]

Most of Venables' original regiment were to die – either on Hispaniola or Jamaica. Left behind in England, and some no doubt destitute, many of the soldiers' families were to later plead for pay arrears. These included the widow of Captain Henry Davis; Mary, the widow of Thomas Gage; the children of Henry Ferroboscoe who died in Jamaica as a captain but who had joined the regiment as an ensign. Anne, widow of gentleman-at-arms William White also claimed his arrears. William Wimball was a lieutenant in 1654 but died a captain in Jamaica. William Ricroft, father of Isaac, a soldier in Carey's company, claimed his son's arrears in 1658, as did Elizabeth Amey in 1656 after her husband William had died. Thomas Huddelstone had enlisted as a private soldier in 1654 in Mercer's company but died a lieutenant, after which his family claimed his arrears.[25]

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[16] Officers in Cooke's company in December 1654 included Lieutenant Tate Howell and Ensign Breres.

[17] Died, date unknown but probably before March 1655. See TNA, CO1/32, ff.56–57.

[18] Died 3 April 1655. See Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.505.

[19] Killed 26 April 1655. See Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[20] Parsons' company was to be transported to and from San Domingo on board the *Hound*. See J.F. Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal of the Western Design, 1654–55', *Jamaica Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1971, p.15.

[21] Killed 26 April 1655. See Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[22] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.116.

[23] TNA, CO 1/32, f.56.

[24] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.125–126.

After Venables departed Jamaica in 1655 the regiment was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Philip Ward. Little is known of his previous background prior to his promotion although he was the army treasurer in December 1654.[26] That he was thought fit to command Venables' own regiment is telling of his ability and prior experience. He seemingly had attained sufficient stature and seniority to have been one of the officers that signed his name to the officers' agreement to send Buller to England to represent the army in July 1655.[27] He was still colonel of the remnants of Venables' regiment in May 1660,[28] but was also seemingly appointed governor of Nevis in 1659;[29] despite this appointment he remained active in the governance of Jamaica until at least 1661 when he was one of those appointed to the newly constituted Jamaica Council, about which time he seems to have resigned his commission, as he was no longer commanding the regiment in 1662 when it was disbanded.[30]

The regiment mustered 1,052 officers and men in Barbados in March 1655.[31] It suffered badly on Hispaniola and Jamaica and by November 1655 numbered only 245 fit men, 238 sick with 38 women and children attached to it.[32] By March 1656 the regiment had a ration strength of just 353 and so had lost around 70 percent of its strength in the past year (a percentage which is undoubtedly on the low side, as most likely the regimental ranks were augmented when Carter's Leeward Island regiment was disbanded and its soldiers amalgamated into other regiments). Throughout 1656 the regimental strength declined until 2 December when it had a ration strength of just 235.[33] In October 1657, after being merged with another regiment, it numbered 491 men.[34] In 1662 the remnants were commanded by Thomas

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[25] Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col. 1574-1660*, pp.462, 472, 494.

[26] TNA, CO 1/32, ff.56–57.

[27] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.661.

[28] F.J. Osborne and S.A.G. Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part Three', Jesuit Archive and Research Center, Box Four, undated.

[29] Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col. 1574-1660*, p.477.

[30] Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col. 1661–1668*, p.37; Edward Long, *A History of Jamaica*, Vol. 1 (London: 1774), p.614.

[31] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.116.

[32] TNA, CO1/32, f.123.

[33] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.112.

[34] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part Two', p.79.

Ballard when it was disbanded having a strength of just 381 officers and men.[35]

During the regiment's first year on Jamaica newly appointed officers included Major Robert Smith,[36] Captain Chad Mattersley, a lieutenant when the regiment left England and who seemingly died in early 1656. He was replaced by Henry Ferrobosco on 12 April, who also died shortly afterwards. Other new officers included Captains Barrett, Howsley, Massey and Wilbraham. The mortality rate amongst officers in Smith's own company was so high during the first six months on Jamaica that he needed to appoint a new ensign at the end of 1655 or in early 1656 and when that officer died, Smith appointed another, Philip Strange, on 20 January along with a new lieutenant, John Dew.[37] Confusingly Dew was noted as being a captain on 19 November 1655 in the minutes of the Council of Officers – this probably illustrates that as a result of the high mortality rate, officers were being de facto promoted long before being officially appointed.[38] In January 1656 Captain-Lieutenant Rudgier, who was commanding the regimental commander's company, and Captain Abraham Pegg, who had been made captain on 10 May 1655, were both transferred out of the regiment when the regiments were reduced by two companies. Rudgier went to Doyley's regiment and Pegg to Holdip's.[39]

Not a single company commander that was with the regiment when it was formed in November 1654 was with the regiment 12 months later. Those that then held these positions had been promoted from junior officer status as a result of the high attrition rate of officers experienced by the regiment. Undoubtedly the same was the case with the lower ranks, as soldiers replaced corporals and corporals replaced sergeants, who in turned replaced the junior officers. This high attrition rate was typical of the entire army as it struggled to survive in the latter half of 1655 on Jamaica. Given the disruption these deaths created and the understandable lack of experience of both the officers and junior ranks, it is of no surprise that this regiment, as with the others, struggled to impose discipline on its men and to get them to do even the most menial of tasks required of them during the first years on Jamaica.

On 13 October 1656, at a Council of Officers, it was decided that Venables' regiment, now under the commanded of Philip Ward, would settle permanently onto land 'at ye Angells, where they now quarter'. Angels is just a few miles north of the then English headquarters at Santiago (now Spanish Town). The regiment was still quartered in the general vicinity, but also at Spanish Town, Passage Fort, Old Harbour 'and parts adjacent', in 1662 when, under the command of Thomas Ballard, the regiment was given 2671*l* 3s in lieu of pay arrears and disbanded.[40]

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[35] Long, *Jamaica*, Vol. 1, p.614; Sir Charles Harding Firth and Godfrey Davis, *The regimental history of Cromwell's army*, Vol. 2 (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1940), pp.669–704; BL, Egerton Ms 2395,Order of the King in Council for the payment of the army in Jamaica, followed by a detailed account of a day's pay, 1662, f.351.

[36] Smith led the first English raid against the Spanish in June 1656. See Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', pp.64–66.

[37] Dew was obviously a well respected officer, for on 19 November 1656 the Council of Officers gave him the authority to chose any officer he wanted, to 'attend and waite uppon the Councell in such imployment as he shall appoint them.' For his past service to the Council, on 20 November, it was ordered that 'for his care and paine he hath formerly taken wherein he hath beene employed' he was allowed to 'have and dispose of for this own use and best advantage thirty raw hydes of those he hath now in his possession.' See Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.37.

[38] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One'; TNA, CO1/32, f.56; BL, Add Ms 12423, Edward Doyley's Journal, 1655–1662.

[39] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', pp.43, 44; Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.126.

Major General Richard Heane had previously commanded a regiment in Guernsey and it is possible that elements of that regiment joined the new regiment that was raised for him in November 1654. Heane had served in Colonel John Bingham's Dorset regiment in 1643 and in Robert Butler's regiment in 1645, also from Dorset. He served as major in John Fitzjames' regiment of Dorset horse from May 1645 until October 1646.[41] After the First Civil War he was appointed governor of Weymouth, commanded a regiment of Dorset militia in 1650 and in 1651 was appointed to command the land forces during Admiral Robert Blake's subjection of Jersey, where he served with distinction.[42] Heane was a well-respected officer with an impressive reputation, and his death on Hispaniola was a severe blow to the army. It was rumoured that after his death his widow married an officer who had served with Heane in Dorset.[43] He was also the link that probably brought a few of the army officers to join the expedition. Stroud Bingham (Buller) was the son of his previous regimental commander in 1643; John Filkin (Carter) had served in Jersey and would have been known to Heane personally. It is probably no coincidence that in the summer of 1655 elements of the Jersey, Guernsey and Scilly Isles garrisons were reduced and some of them had been earmarked to be sent to join Venables' army as reinforcements.[44] Venables claimed that Heane had reason to believe that he would have been appointed commander of the army and it would seem that his experience was every bit as relevant as Venables', and he might well have felt aggrieved to have been passed over.

As the regiment prepared for departure in December 1654 it consisted of the following companies:

Major General Richard Heane[45]
Lieutenant Colonel John Clarke[46]
Major Samuel Barry
Captain Henry Archbould
Captain Richard Bamford

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[40] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.95; Long, *Jamaica*, Vol. 1, p.614.

[41] TNA, SP16/514 Part 2, State Papers Domestic, Charles I. Letters and Papers 1646, f.27.

[42] Firth and Davis, *Regimental History*, Vol. 2, pp.718–719; TNA, SP25/119, Commissions granted by the Councell to Officers in the severall Countyes for the Militia, 1649–1651, f.18.

[43] Robert K.G. Temple, 'The Massey Brigade in the West', *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, Vol. 31, no. 322, 1985, p.9, n39.

[44] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD 1655* (London: Longmans & Co, 1881), p.252.

[45] Killed 26 April 1655.

[46] Clarke died 9 May 1655 and was one of the first Englishmen to be buried on Jamaica.

Captain Daniel Smith[47]
Captain George [Gregory] Toms
Captain Edward Willett[48]
Captain Thomas Walter[49]
Captain Richard Younge[50]

Clarke, who briefly commanded the regiment after Heane's death, died at sea on 9 May 1655 'of a fever caused by two wounds received in the last business at Hispaniola'. On 11 May he was 'carried ashore, and buried; after two volleys ashore, he had ten guns from use [the *Swiftsure*], and six from the *Convertine*.'[51] He left behind a wife and seven children in England who sought, and obtained, assistance from the State upon this death.[52] Upon Clarke's death the regiment was taken over by Richard Holdip when his own regiment was disbanded.

Nothing is known of Barry's previous service but he later commanded the remnants of Heane's regiment in Jamaica after Holdip's dismissal from as early as 9 June 1655.[53] In December 1658, back in England (he personally returned to England with the news of the English victory at the Battle of Rio Nuevo), he petitioned Richard Cromwell for his arrears. He was back in Jamaica commanding the regiment when it was disbanded in 1662 and led the failed attempt to retake Tortuga in 1663. In July 1667 he commanded a regiment during the English attack on Surinam and was afterwards appointed governor of the colony. Barry Street in modern Kingston is named after him.[54]

Archbould was an experienced officer. He had served as a captain with Sir William Waller in the 1643 Western Campaign and was present at the Siege of Bristol that year. He then served under the Earl of Manchester and had risen to the rank of lieutenant colonel by 1645.[55] It is not clear how he was engaged for the decade prior to joining Heane's regiment. On Jamaica he was transferred to Carter's regiment as first major and later lieutenant colonel after Carter's death. He was court-martialled for sedition in 1656 but acquitted. In time he became a prosperous planter and a leading member of the colonial government. His plantation, known as *Constant Spring*, was located in Liguanea which is now a northern suburb in modern-day Kingston.[56]

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[47] Nothing is known of Daniel Smith. He seems to have died by early 1656 when his company was taken over by Abraham Pegg. See BL Add Ms 12423, Edward Doyley's Journal.

[48] Nothing is known of Willett. An Edward Willett served throughout the Civil War first in Sir John Hampden's regiment, then Sir John Burrow's and finally Sir William Waller's. This might be the same person.

[49] Nothing is known about Walter. Firth surmises that he might have have been Adjutant General Walters who was killed on 18 April 1654. See Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.117.

[50] Later became Adjutant General but had died prior to October 1656 (probably before 12 March 1656 as a different Adjutant General was named at a Council of Officers meeting on that date). See Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col.* 1574–1660, p.454; Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.50.

[51] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.99, 100.

[52] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1655*, p.306.

[53] HMC, *The manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland, 13th Report Appendix Part Two*, Vol. 2 (London: HMSO, 1891), p.93.

[54] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 7, p.262; Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col.* 1574–1660, pp.470–471; Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col.* 1661–1668, pp.487–490; Frank Cundall, *Historic Jamaica: With fifty-two illustrations* (London: The Institute of Jamaica, 1915), p.155.

[55] TNA, SP28/252, Committee for taking accounts of the whole kingdom: 1643–1649 Letter Books, f.233.

Bamford had served in Sir William Constable's regiment from at least 1650 and later held a position as surveyor of delinquents' lands prior to being appointed to Heane's regiment in 1654. He was promoted to major on 15 April 1655 whilst still on Hispaniola but was dead by September 1656 when his widow, Anne, claimed his arrears.[57] Toms had served in Richard Ingoldsby's regiment during the Civil War and in about 1651 he was serving as a lieutenant on board the state ship *Convert*. He prospered on Jamaica, serving on the Council of Jamaica in 1667.[58]

With the regiment when it left England was William Fudge the gunsmith, Rich Clearke the gentleman-at-arms, Roger Manners the chaplain, and Bartho. Jackson the quartermaster.[59] After Hispaniola Stephen Rosse and John Hamilton were both commissioned captains whilst in May, on Jamaica, Thomas Hill was also promoted to captain whilst Ben Gordward was appointed his lieutenant. At the same time William Hall was made ensign, probably of Rosse's company.[60] During 1656 the following company commanders are mentioned, which again illustrates the high rate of attrition within the army. Major Hope (he survived and was active in colony in the 1660s and was instrumental in quashing the mutiny of 1660), captains Riber (possibly River and seemingly still in the regiment in 1662 and captain in Barry's militia regiment in 1663[61]), Pegg, Massey, Vallet and Gregory. Further illustrating the high mortality rate, in early 1656 the regiment was required to appoint a new quartermaster (Thomas Rose) and then on 1 March another one (Humphrey Smalwood). Barry's own company appointed two new ensigns in the first few months of 1656, Massey's two lieutenants and an ensign, whilst Gregory needed to appoint both a new lieutenant and a new ensign.[62] In 1661 a Captain Tome (possibly Gregory Toms) is mentioned in the regiment.[63]

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[56] Vere Langford Oliver (ed.), *Caribbeana: being miscellaneous papers relating to the history, genealogy, topography, and antiquities of the British West Indies* (London: Mitchell, Hughes and Clarke, 1912), pp.338–340. See Cundall, *Historic Jamaica*, pp.216–221, for an interesting history of the plantation and the famous hotel that once stood within its grounds.

[57] Malcolm Wanklyn, *Reconstructing the New Model Army*, Vol. 1 (Solihull: Helion & Company Limited, 2015), p.48; Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.405; Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.111; Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col.* 1574–1660, p.454.

[58] TNA, SP18/61, Admiralty Committee and Navy Commissioners' Papers, 1653, f.201; Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col. 1661–1668*, p.287.

[59] TNA, CO1/32, f.56.

[60] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.125–126.

[61] TNA, HCA 1/9, HCA 1/9, 1661, f.17; Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col. 1661–1668*, pp.113, 117–118.

[62] BL, Add Ms 12423, Edward Doyley's Journal.

[63] TNA, HCA 1/9, f.17.

Prior to leaving Barbados the regiment consisted of 1,188 officers and men.[64] In November 1655 it mustered only 348 fit men, 224 sick and had 30 women and children attached to it.[65] On 6 March 1656 it had a ration strength of 448, on 27 March 432. By 11 July it had fallen to 409 and by 3 December it was only 367.[66] In October 1656 the regiment was ordered to 'take such proportion of plantable land as they shall find at Ligonea [*sic*], where they now quarter'.[67] The regiment remained on the Liguanea Plain until it was disbanded, still under Barry's command, in 1662, when it consisted of 363 officers and men and was given a donative of 2,652*l* 5s 7d.[68]

Richard Fortescue's regiment, when the expedition set sail, consisted of:

Colonel Richard Fortescue
Lieutenant Colonel Holdip
Major (?)[69]
Captain William Hill
Captain Henry Bartlitt
Captain Bartho. Davice [Davies/Davis]
Captain Obadiah Edwards[70]
Captain John Keene[71]
Captain Samuel Leverington
Captain Richard Weles (Wells)
Captain Thomas White

Fortescue was well regarded for both his piety and his previous service in the Parliamentarian army. One commentator said of him, 'his careful temper is such, that none knows him our armie, fleet, or island, but honour him', whilst Venables described him as 'much esteemed by Godly Men, Ministers, and others, for his Piety and Valour, and Conduct declar'd in several Services in England'.[72] He had been a captain in Henry Bulstrode's infantry regiment in 1642, in January 1643 he was major, by October lieutenant colonel and in September 1644 he was made colonel of the regiment and in 1646 claimed he was owed 979*l* in arrears.[73] He was promoted to major general when Venables returned to England but died in October 1655 and the regiment seems to then have passed to (Major) Richard Weles (Wells).[74] Holdip was appointed colonel of the regiment raised in St. Christopher in March 1655 and when this was disbanded sometime around June 1655 he was appointed commander of Heane's old regiment, after Clarke had died. Hill replaced Holdip as lieutenant colonel but he died in June and was replaced by Bartlitt whilst White became major.[75]

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[64] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.117.

[65] TNA, CO1/32, f.123.

[66] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.112.

[67] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.95.

[68] Long, *Jamaica*, Vol. 1, p.614; BL, Egerton Ms 2395, Order of the King in Council for the payment of the army in Jamaica, followed by a detailed account of a day's pay, f.351.

[69] No record exists of who the regiment's major was at formation. William Hill had been appointed to the position by the time of his death (before September 1656). No mention is made of who the major was at the Barbados muster.

[70] Nothing is known of Edwards who was most likely dead by the end of 1655 or early 1656 on Jamaica.

[71] Keene was still alive in April 1656. See BL, Add Ms 12423, Edward Doyley's Journal.

[72] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.159; Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.92.

[73] TNA, SP28/266 Part 1, Committee for Petitions: cases 1647–1648, f.59.

[74] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.112.

Davis died on 22 October 1655.[76] He was a Londoner and his wife had operated hackney coaches there for many years before his departure from England. One of the drummers in his company was Edward Bestwick, who was taken prisoner on Jamaica.[77] Leverington, who Venables called 'a Gallant Man', died of wounds received on Hispaniola.[78] White was wounded in Jamaica early in the occupation and returned in England at the same time Venables did. He had served in the army since at least 1648, both in England and Scotland, as well as having served at sea during the Dutch War. He was serving in Goffe's regiment in London when he transferred to Fortescue's regiment bound for the West Indies. He recovered and was to later serve as a captain (and later major) in Herbert Morley's regiment in 1659.[79] He was most likely the author of a lengthy letter about the 1655 campaign that was published on his return to England.[80]

When the regiment departed England, Fortescue's own company was commanded by Captain-Lieutenant William Hambleyn, Nathanill Lane was the chaplain and Roger Gates the gunsmith. Tho. May, John Poulton and Thomas Edwards were all gentlemen-at-arms whilst the chirurgeon, John Henry Hillsman, was assisted by Edmond Stapelton. Ralph Hardwick was the Quartermaster.[81] William Smith was appointed captain on 31 March 1654 in Barbados and his lieutenant was Henry Debben. Smith probably replaced either Kenne or Edwards.[82] The company lost at least five company commanders on Hispaniola and during the first months on Jamaica. New captains promoted during this time included John Pope, Evans and Hamilton.[83]

Some of the soldiers from this regiment had an eventful departure from England. Lieutenant John Bray, of Leverington's company, along with a sergeant, a drummer, a gentleman-at-arms and seven soldiers from the same company, plus 24 from White's company and eight from the unknown major's company, were all embarked on the *Pelican* in Portsmouth. They were accompanied on board by a single soldier from Venables' regiment and three of the *reformadoes*. The *Pelican* sprang a leak just off Land's End and had to 'fire guns to keep with the fleet'. The vessel was pronounced 'unfit for the voyage' and was ordered to return. 'With great danger and difficulty' they made it to Kinsale, and from there they had 'to pump day and night to bring our vessel to England'. They were then forced to stay behind 'because the other ships were so full of seamen and soldiers that they could not take us in'. Back in England Bray petitioned Desborough for relief, stating he had 'spent so much money to encourage the soldiers not to desert, that he cannot go out again till provided afresh'.[84] It is unknown whether Bray and his companions ever made it to join the army in the West Indies, but it is recorded that 11 soldiers of the regiment deserted when they were at Kinsale.[85]

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[75] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.126; Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col. 1574-1660*, pp.454, 455; Firth (ed.), *Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.56; Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1655-56*, p.94.

[76] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD 1656-7* (London: Longmans & Co, 1883), p.106.

[77] Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col. 1574-1660*, p.455; Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1656-7*, p.29.

[78] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.32.

[79] TNA, SP18/102, Council of State: Letters and Papers, 1655, f.5; Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1655-56*, p.61; Malcolm Wanklyn, *Reconstructing the New Model Army*, Vol. 2 (Solihull: Helion & Company Limited, 2015), p.116.

[80] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition into the Spanish West Indies in 1655', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables, with an appendix of papers relating to the expedition to the West Indies and the conquest of Jamaica, 1654-1655* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1900).

[81] TNA, CO1/32, ff.56–57.

[82] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.125.

[83] BL, Add Ms 12423, Edward Doyley's Journal.

In March 1655 Fortescue's regiment mustered 1,194 officers and men.[86] By November it could only muster 359 fit men and 356 sick.[87] On 6 March 1656 it had a ration strength of 416, by 16 April it was down to 389 and on 2 December only 355.[88] As a result of the Spanish attacks around Santiago in March 1656, and to block the route from Anaya to Santiago, Fortescue's regiment (with Carter's), were redeployed to 'ye riverside about five myles hence'. This area is most likely between Coleburn's and Bowers' Gully in modern day St. Catherine's parish.[89] However the regiment was quartered in Guanaboa Vale district by October 1656, when it was instructed to start planting the land.[90] Fortescue's regiment, along with Carter's and Humphrey's regiments, were reduced in April 1657 and their men distributed amongst the remaining four regiments. It seems likely that much of Fortescue's was merged with Buller's regiment at this time. In 1662 Buller's regiment, which since his departure in 1655 had been commanded by first Barrington and then Cornelius Burroughs, was based in the Guanaboa Vale when it was disbanded.[91]

Anthony Buller's regiment prior to embarkation consisted of:

Colonel Anthony Buller
Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Barrington
Major Michael Bland
Captain Adam Baynard[92]
Captain Stroud Bingham
Captain Christopher Cooper[93]
Captain Vincent Corbitt

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[84] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1655*, p.110.
[85] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1655*, p.420.
[86] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.118.
[87] TNA, CO1/32, f.123.
[88] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.112.
[89] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.52.
[90] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.95.
[91] Thomas Birch (ed.), *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, Vol. 6 (London: Fletcher Gyles, 1742), p.235; Long, *Jamaica*, Vol. 1, p.614.
[92] Baynard died sometime in 1655. Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col. 1574–1660*, p.454.
[93] Nothing is known of his prior experience, but he held the post of major briefly and then died in Jamaica in 1655. Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col. 1574–1660*, p.436.

Captain John Minn [Minne]
Captain [Thomas] Throckmorton[94]
Captain(?) Arundall[95]

Buller had rather a chequered past. In 1644 he was serving as a captain of horse in Colonel Behre's regiment in the Earl of Essex's army during the Lostwithiel campaign.[96] In April 1645, now a major, he was ordered to join Massey's western brigade with his own and one other regiment. This he eventually did and for a time it was intended that he merge both units into a single regiment under his command. However, it was finally decided to merge both with Massey's own regiment whilst he was to retain his rank of major in the new regiment. It is possible that this change of heart was due to the complaints received concerning the discreditable actions of the men under his command. It had been reported that the Derby House Committee in London had 'received very great complaints from the country of the intolerable miscarriage of your troopers under Major Buller, whereby great disservice is done to the Parliament by the robbing, spoiling, and plundering of the people, they also giving extreme offence by their swearing, drinking, and all kind of debaucheries.'[97] In 1646 Buller, now a colonel, was appointed governor of the Parliamentarian garrison on the Isles of Scilly, but in a Royalist coup in August 1648 the island was seized and Buller ignominiously made captive. At the time he was described as a gentleman 'of honour and gallantry and well meriting' his command. He was released sometime after October 1648, though does not appear to have continued to serve in the army.[98]

In April 1654 he became involved in a supposed French plot to assassinate Oliver Cromwell, when he was approached by a Frenchman known as Doctor Naudin in London. Buller's version of events states Naudin asked him if he 'would join with him to cutt of the protector' in a scheme he was planning. Buller procrastinated for a few days, after which he seemingly had said enough words of encouragement for Naudin to approach de Baas, the French envoy in London, seeking material support from the French government for his plan. Naudin promised to provide de Baas with 'private news, how affairs went in Scotland, and to procure him a true list of the strength of the army in England and Wales, and how and where they were quartered, and the number in each garison [*sic*], and also of the strength of the army and garisons [*sic*] in Ireland'. He approached Buller to procure such detail which request Buller later claimed 'did very much trouble me'. Naudin, for his part, claimed he was approached by de Baas with a 'design to trouble the affairs of England' and that he just went along with it 'to find out the design' and approached Buller to notify him 'with this discourse'. These shenanigans formed part of the broader Gerard plot, which when uncovered by the English government in early June 1654, led to the arrest of Naudin and the examination of Buller. In his examination Buller freely admitted the approach made by Naudin to him but never explained why he had not disclosed the matter to the government at the time. There is no evidence that Buller was an active conspirator but he was tainted by association, whilst his being caught unawares on the Isles of Scilly in 1648 did not help his personal credibility. Whether he was offered the command of the regiment bound for the West Indies, just a few months later, as an opportunity for vindication or to remove a potential threat from England, is unclear.[99] Buller was seemingly vain (he loved the flattery Naudin used on him), whilst John Berkenhead said of him, 'The gentleman himself is stout, loves applause and flattery.'[100] Venables, always looking for scapegoats, blamed his ill discipline and rashness for advancing on San Domingo without orders after his landing on Hispaniola in April, which consequently led to the English defeat, as Venables believed. Venables said of him he had 'never yet clear'd himself about the loss of Scilly'.[101] Francis Barrington, however, specifically hoped to serve under Buller, such was his reputation to some at least.[102] Once the army arrived in Jamaica he was appointed by his brother officers to return to England in June 1655 to 'represent the condition of the army and this island' to the government and 'to procure such reliefs and supplies, as shall be needfull for the carrying on of this design'.[103] He later served in the Third Protectorate Parliament as well as the Convention Parliament and after the Restoration was commissioned into the army and was again appointed Governor of the Isles of Scilly.

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[94] Executed for mutiny in 1656.

[95] Nothing is known about this officer, who was paid in England in 1654 before the army departed, but his name does not appear in the muster list of March 1655 so he presumably died or was otherwise indisposed in Barbados. He was replaced by Poulton, of whom no further record exists, and so it is safe to assume he died early during the English occupation of Jamaica.

[96] Richard Symonds, ed. Charles Edward Long, *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army During the Great Civil War*, Vol. 74 (London: Camden Society, 1859), p.73.

[97] William Douglas Hamilton (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, Charles I, 1644–45* (London: 1890), pp.401, 519, 561.

[98] HMC, *Report on the Pepys manuscripts preserved at Magdalene College, Cambridge* (London: 1911), pp.274, 230.

After departing for England in 1655 Buller was replaced by Barrington, who proved to be a competent commander and his accidental death in 1660 was sorely mourned. Barrington, son of a Member of Parliament and cousin to Cromwell's groom of the bedchamber, had served in John Okey's dragoons in 1648 when he fought at Colchester and later in Ireland in Henry Cromwell's regiment of horse. Such was the high esteem that Barrington was held in Edward Doyley was to later recommend him as a replacement for him as commander-in-chief of the army on Jamaica.[104] A collection of Barrington's letters from the expedition have survived and are a great source of information concerning the events of 1655 onwards.[105] After his death Barrington was replaced as colonel by Cornelius Burroughs, formerly the Steward General of the army and who arrived in Jamaica in 1657.

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[99] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 2, pp.351–351.

[100] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.159.

[101] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.93.

[102] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.571.

[103] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.523; Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.62–63.

[104] Firth and Davis, *Regimental History*, Vol. 2, p.704; TT, *A diary of the siege of Colchester by the forces under the command of his excellency the Lord General Fairfax*, 1648, 669.f.13[6].

[105] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), pp.571–575.

Michael Bland, from Nottinghamshire, was another experienced officer. He had served in the army against the Scots in 1640 and had enlisted into Lord Wharton's force for Ireland in 1642. He fought at Edgehill in Sir William Fairfax's regiment,[106] was captured in 1643 but from 1645 was serving as a captain in Sir Thomas Fairfax's regiment in the New Model Army.[107] In 1649 he served in Ireland,[108] and in 1654 was commissioned as major in Buller's regiment bound for the West Indies.[109] On 30 April 1655 he was appointed lieutenant colonel in Holdip's regiment,[110] possibly to give it much-needed leadership after performing poorly on Hispaniola. He led one of the first raids into the interior of Jamaica in June 1655 but was heavily criticised for his role during it.[111] After this regiment was reduced in June 1655 on Jamaica it is not clear where he was transferred though he was acting as commissary in May 1656. At some point he returned to England (possibly 1657 when he claimed his arrears) and served in the army of 1660 and petitioned Charles II for back pay the following year.[112]

Bingham was originally from Dorset, and his commission is believed to have been signed by Cromwell personally on 20 November 1654. He had four children and probably died on Jamaica after June 1656. He had previously been ensign in Colonel John Bingham's regiment (his father) in the garrison of Guernsey.[113] A Vincent Corbett was cornet in the London troop of horse raised by Maurice Thompson's brother George in 1642 and might be the same person. Other than this nothing is known of his previous experience and he also held the rank of major before he too died in 1655 on Jamaica. His lieutenant was Charles Glapthorne when the regiment departed England.[114] Corbett later became a major but was dead by October 1655.[115] James Winter was the chirurgeon when the regiment left England. James Bland and Will Wosley were gentlemen-at-arms whilst George Varley was the gunsmith. John Vaughan was appointed the regimental chaplain on 30 April 1655 on Hispaniola. It is unknown if he replaced a deceased chaplain at the time, but it seems likely.[116]

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[106] Edward Peacock (ed.), *The Army Lists of the Roundheads and Cavaliers* (London: Chatto & Windus (reprinted by Ken Trotman Books 1983), 1874), pp.44, 70, 7.

[107] TNA, SP28/44, Warrants issued by army committees, military commanders, etc., 1646, f.215.

[108] Firth and Davis, *Regimental History*, Vol. 2, p.708.

[109] BL, Add Ms 12423, Edward Doyley's Journal, 1655–1662, f.56.

[110] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.125.

[111] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.47, 124; HMC, *Portland Part Two*, Vol. 2, pp.574–575.

[112] Peacock (ed.), *Army Lists*, pp.87, 44; Wanklyn, *NMA* Vol. 2, p.182; Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.125; Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.61; Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col. 1574-1660*, p.462; Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col. 1661-1668*, p.41.

[113] John Hutchins, *The history and antiquities of the County of Dorset ... Third edition ... With a new introduction by Robert Douch*, ed. Robert Douch (East Ardsley: E.P. Publishing in collaboration with Dorset County Library, 1973), p.374; Mary Ann Everett Green (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1651* (London: Longman, 1877), p.526.

[114] Peacock (ed.), *Army Lists*, p.55; Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col. 1574-1660*, p.494; TNA, CO1/32, f.57; Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1656-7*, p.29.

[115] TT, John Hall (ed.), *Mercurius Politicus, 31 January-7 February 1656*, no. 295, London, 78:E.492[3].

[116] TNA, CO1/32, f.56; Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.125.

In Barbados the regiment comprised 1,046 officers and men.[117] At a muster in November 1655 it consisted of 361 fit and 217 sick men with 27 women and children attached to it.[118] On 6 March 1656 it had a ration strength of 416, by 11 July it was 449 and by 2 December just 323.[119] As with the other regiments Buller's lost most of its officers before the end of 1655, mainly through sickness. New company commanders appointed within the first 12 months on Jamaica included captains Thomas Allen (a lieutenant when the regiment left England), Jonathan Penksbill (possibly Arundel's ensign), Watson, Peter Parry (Cooper's lieutenant) and Fleetwood. Barrington's company appointed a new lieutenant (Anthony Hore) in January 1656 and a new one was needed in August (Rowland Robinson) as well as two new ensigns within four months of each other (Rowland Robinson and John Thomas). Throckmorton was also required to replace both his lieutenant and his ensign in early 1656.[120]

On 27 January 1656 because of concerns that the Spanish might land at Old Harbour in an attempt to recapture Jamaica, Buller's regiment, with Doyley's, was ordered to redeploy from around Santiago to the Anaya region.[121] As Carter's regiment was sent to this area only two months later, in response to a Spanish raid on Santiago, it is possible that this force had returned to Santiago by the time of this raid. In October 1656 the regiment was quartered at 'Chimanas' which is most likely the area between modern Spanish Town and Passage Fort, and which still retains the name Caymanas today. One company of this regiment permanently garrisoned Passage Fort under Captain Harrington during the first years of the occupation. In October 1657 it had a ration strength of 520 men.[122] However, when it was disbanded in 1662, is was described as being settled at 'Guanaboa and Precinct'. Most likely the regiment merged with Fortescue's old regiment at some time after 1657 and moved to the more productive Guanaboa Vale.[123] When it was disbanded in 1662 it mustered some 414 officers and men.[124]

Captain Woodward commanded a company in the regiment in late 1659 when one of his sergeants, William Wheeler, was involved in an incident at sea when he was serving as a privateer aboard the *Pearl*.[125] Wheeler was possibly the sergeant of the same name who was in Holdip's company of Fortescue's regiment when it left England in 1654.[126]

A Captain Rudier is mentioned in the regiment in 1661 and this might well be the Captain Rudiger of Doyley's own regiment in 1656.[127] One member of the regiment who was to go on an earn fame and fortune, or perhaps infamy is a more appropriate term, was a certain Henry Morgan. The later pirate and Jamaica Governor was a soldier in the regiment in early 1661 when he was implicated in the plundering of the Dutch vessel *St. Peter*, and he was detained and forced to wear an iron collar pending a decision on his future. When he joined the regiment is unclear. Tradition variously has it that the Bristol resident sailed with Venables' army in 1654 or later came to Jamaica as an indentured servant, but there is no evidence for either suggestion. His name first appears in June 1660 when he signed on to join the crew of the *Edward* as a gunner.[128]

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[117] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.119.

[118] TNA, CO1/32, f.123.

[119] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.112.

[120] BL, Add Ms 12423, Edward Doyley's Journal; TNA, CO1/32, f.56.

[121] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.44.

[122] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part Two', p.79.

[123] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.98; Long, *Jamaica*, Vol. 1, p.614.

[124] BL, Egerton Ms 2395, Order of the King in Council for the payment of the army in Jamaica, followed by a detailed account of a day's pay, f.351.

[125] TNA, HCA 1/9, f.9.

[126] TNA, CO1/32, f.56.

[127] TNA, HCA 1/9, f.17; BL, Add Ms 12423, Edward Doyley's Journal.

Andrew Carter commanded the fifth and final regiment raised in England for the expedition, and upon embarkation in England it consisted of:

Colonel Andrew Carter
Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Bushell
Major John Fergeson
Captain Nathaniel Bowers
Captain Winkfield Blunt[129]
Captain Abraham Fincher[130]
Captain Nicholas Halford
Captain Thomas Salkeild[131]
Captain Daniel How[132]
Captain John Filkins

Carter seems to have been a soldier of some experience. He had served in John Bright's Yorkshire regiment during the First Civil War and was a major in June 1646[133] and later lieutenant colonel. It is not known when Carter joined that regiment but it might well have been in 1643 when it was raised or shortly after. It had fought under Cromwell at the Battle of Preston (1648) and in Scotland in 1650 and was commanded by John Lambert when it fought at Dunbar in 1650. It is likely Carter fought at Dunbar, probably at Preston and perhaps at Marston Moor.[134] In July 1651 he resigned his commission to avoid a court martial over his alleged 'tippling' in Scotland.[135] When

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[128] TNA, HCA 1/9, f.17; The Huntingdon Museum California, BL 316, An account of the ship 'Edward's' Men, William Blathwayt Papers, 1657–1770, 1660.

[129] Nothing is known about Blunt though he was evidently still alive during the early months of 1656. See BL, Add Ms 12423, Edward Doyley's Journal.

[130] Nothing is known about Fincher; he became sick on Hispaniola but recovered and was alive in June 1656, though Firth believes he died around August 1656. See Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.507; TNA, CO 1/32, f.56; Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.120.

[131] Other than that he was dead by 1656, nothing else is known about him. See Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col. 1574–1660*, p.454.

[132] How wrote some letters of support for Venables after he returned to England with the General, but nothing else is known of him, although Venables clearly respected him. See Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.40–46, 92.

[133] TNA, SP28/302, Bills and Receipts: army, county committees, 1646, f.760. See also Wanklyn, *NMA* Vol. 2, p.54.

[134] Firth and Davis, *Regimental History*, Vol. 2, pp.525–527.

[135] TNA, SP28/74, Warrants issued by army committees, military commanders, etc.; Jan–Feb 1651, 1651, f.1; Sir Walter Calverley Trevelyan (ed.), *Letters from Roundhead officers written from*

Carter died Henry Archbould, formerly of Heane's regiment, was appointed commander and led the regiment until it was disbanded in 1661.

A Thomas Bushell was captain-lieutenant in the Earl of Essex regiment in 1645 prior to it being disbanded and its soldiers then formed the regiment of Sir Thomas Fairfax. No reference to this officer appears in later officer lists.[136] The regiment itself later became Cromwell's own and was commanded then by William Goffe. The regiment then became Goffe's own in 1650 and was garrisoned in London during the early 1650s. It is known from other sources that Goffe's regiment was one of those that supplied the nucleus of Venables' army and so it is possible this is the same person. He was dead by September 1656 when his wife applied for his arrears and he most likely died early in the Jamaican occupation.[137] Nothing of Ferguson's previous experience can be established with certainty. He might have been the captain of that name who served in Harley's regiment in 1645 which later became Thomas Pride's regiment. He was killed on 22 April 1655, possibly having transferred to Venables' own regiment.[138]

Bowers most likely hailed from around Bradford and raised a company of foot which served in Lord Fairfax's army in 1642/1643. His company was later attached to John Bright's regiment and so he must have served alongside Andrew Carter for some years.[139] However he is not listed as an officer of Bright's regiment in 1646 or 1648.[140] He died before October 1656 when Captain John Hodgson, previously ensign to Bowers' company during the Civil War, petitioned the Council of State for Bowers' arrears. According to Hodgson he had loaned Bowers 58*l* prior to his departure with Venables and that Hodgson was to be repaid from Bowers from his fourth month pay that was to be paid in England during his absence. As only 22*l* 8s had been repaid he was claiming the balance after Bowers' death.[141] Hodgson also wrote a detailed account of his service during the civil wars, in which Bowers is mentioned twice, and from which it can be taken as much as the same experience that Bowers would have had in the early years of the war.[142] Bowers Gully, in St. Catherine's parish, is named after him.

John Filkins had been a lieutenant in Sir Hardress Waller's regiment in 1646. This original New Model Army regiment had been raised in 1645 initially for James Holborne by merging his regiment from Sir William Waller's army with that of Sir Hardress Waller. A John Filkins was a sergeant and then ensign in Holborne's regiment in November 1644.[143] This is most

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Scotland and chiefly addressed to Captain Adam Baynes (Edinburgh: The Bannatyne Club, 1856), p.31.

[136] Wanklyn, *NMA* Vol. 1, p.145.

[137] Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col. 1574–1660*, p.454.

[138] Wanklyn, *NMA* Vol. 1, p.58; Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.120.

[139] Andrew James Hooper, 'The extent of support for Parliament in Yorkshire durng the early stages of the First Civil War' (PhD Thesis, University of York, 1999), p.62; Sir Henry Slingsby, *Original memoirs, written during the great civil war; being the life of Sir Henry Slingsby, and memoirs of Capt. (John) Hodgson*, (Edinburgh: 1806), p.96.

[140] TNA, SP28/302, ff.760, 242; Wanklyn, *NMA* Vol. 2, p.159.

[141] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1656–7*, p.134.

[142] Slingsby, *Original Memoirs*, pp.83–163.

[143] Laurence Spring, *Waller's Army: The Regiments of Sir William Waller's Southern Association* (Farnham: The Pike and Shot Society, 2007), p.69.

likely the same person. That being the case Filkins had certainly seen some action as Holborne's regiment had fought at Basing House (1643), Cheriton (1644), and Cropredy Bridge (1644). Hardress Waller's regiment then served at Naseby, Langport, Bristol and Basing House (1645). In 1647 Filkins was lieutenant to Captain Philip Ebzery in Waller's regiment and was signatory to the 'Declaration of the Armie' at Saffron Walden that same year.[144] In 1649 half the regiment transferred to Ireland and the remainder were formed into a regiment under Colonel John Clarke which then took part in the attack on Jersey in 1651. Ebzery, now major, played a prominent role in the attack on Jersey and it is likely that Filkins accompanied him. Certainly Filkins was present as he certified a statement confirming the actions of Thomas Wright, the Tower of London 'firemaster'.[145] On Jamaica he had been promoted to major by October 1655[146] and in 1656 was instrumental in laying accusations against the new regimental commander, Henry Archbould.[147] Filkins survived Jamaica and returned to England prior to 1661 when he personally claimed his arrears.[148] Nothing is known of Halford's early life but he is mentioned in a letter dated 14 October 1655 regarding his role in some fighting between the English and Spanish. He survived his time in Jamaica and was back in England by 1661 when he claimed his arrears.[149] Prior to the regiment's departure from England the chaplain was William Chidley and the chirurgeon was Walter Barefoote. Lasen Jenkins was the gunsmith with his mate John Palmer, whilst William Johnson was a gentleman-at-arms. Will Blewfield was the regimental quartermaster.[150]

Prior to leaving Barbados in March 1655 the regiment consisted of 130 officers and 834 soldiers, making it the weakest of the regiments from England.[151] By November it numbered 277 fit and 365 sick plus 18 women and children attached to it.[152] On 6 March 1656 it numbered 390 men on its ration strength, on 27 March 350 and on 16 April 342. On 19 June it had 325 men on its strength, on 10 September 316 and on 12 November only 308.[153] Later company commanders included Captains Bland and Colborne (after whom Colburn Gully in St. Catherine's parish is named). Such was the mortality rate in Fincher's company in 1656 he needed to appoint two new lieutenants and a new ensign within a few months.[154]

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[144] Wanklyn, *NMA* Vol. 1, p.112; TT, Anon., *The declaration of the armie under His Excellency Sir Thomas Fairfax...*,1647, 62:E.390[26].

[145] Sir Charles Harding Firth,(ed.), *The Clarke papers: Selections from the papers of William Clarke, secretary to the Council of the Army, 1647–1649, and to General Monck and the commanders of the army in Scotland, 1651–1660*, Vol. 2 (London: The Camden Society, 1894), p.231; Thomas Wright, *A perfect narrative of the particular service performed by Thomas Wright firemaster with a morter-peice...* (Early English Books, 1641–1700 / 2105:16 [London? : s.n., 1652], 1652).

[146] TT, John Hall (ed.), *Mercurius Politicus, 31 January–7 February 1656*, no. 295, London, 78:E.492[3].

[147] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 5, p.102.

[148] Sainsbury (ed.), *CSP Col. 1661–1668*, p.41.

[149] TT, *Mercurius Politicus, 31 January–7 February 1656*, 78:E.492[3]; Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 5, p.41.

[150] TNA, CO1/32, f.56.

[151] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.120.

[152] TNA, CO1/32, f.130.

[153] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.112.

[154] BL, Add Ms 12423, Edward Doyley's Journal.

Carter's regiment (with Fortescue's) was deployed along the Black River in March 1656 as a result of the Spanish attack on Santiago.[155] This is not the Black River in St. Elizabeth parish on the south-western side of the island, but refers to one of the rivers that flowed across the Anaya plain. The regiment was still there in October when it was ordered to begin planting in the region.[156] However, around April 1657, the army was reduced to just four regiments and Carter's was one of those disbanded and its men dispersed amongst other regiments.[157] Given that it was Venables' old regiment that was in this region when the army was disbanded in 1662, it is plausible that Carter's merged with Venables' regiment in 1657.[158]

The army that concentrated in Portsmouth in December 1654 also included a single troop of horse under the command of Captain Henry Jones. Initially intended to have an establishment of 100 horse plus officers it was reduced to 60 by order of the Council of State on 2 December.[159] The Army Committee on 21 November was ordered to purchase 50 horses at a cost of 5s each for the use of the troop whilst the Ordnance Office was ordered to issue '50 saddles and other horse furniture'.[160]

Prior to the departure of the army 23 of the troop received pay, and from this record a partial reconstruction of the troop can be made:[161]

Captain Henry Jones
Lieutenant John Josse
Lieutenant John Otter
Cornet Samuell Bedl[...]
Trumpeter William Thedford
Chirurgeon Thomas Lugg
Chirurgeon Henry Hilliard[162]
Corporal Holland Sutton

Jones was able to return to England in the summer of 1656 arriving in Falmouth on 8 September.[163] Included on the list of those paid prior to leaving England in 1654 were Troopers Thomas Blunter and Martin van Alfvan. Blunter became a lieutenant and commanded the troop after Jones' departure whilst van Alfvan commanded a second, short-lived troop raised on Jamaica around January 1656. By April 1656 van Alfvan was commanding a company in Humphrey's regiment and later a privateer ship.[164] From the speed of their promotions it is safe to assume all the more senior ranks of the troop had died by early 1656. At least some of the troop did make it to Barbados with the main army, because at the muster held in March 1655 'part of Capt. Jones Troope' is referred to.[165] But the remainder only arrived in Jamaica in June.

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[155] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.52.

[156] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.98.

[157] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 6, p.235.

[158] Long, *Jamaica*, Vol. 1, p.614.

[159] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.405.

[160] Everett Green,(ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.398.

[161] TNA, CO1/32, f.57.

[162] Hilliard became an important member of the early colonial administration in Jamaica, but in 1663 was implicated in the embezzlement of goods seized during Myng's raid on Campeche. TNA, SP25/77, Council of State: Order Books, 1656–1657, f.398; TNA, HCA45/59, Vice Admiralty Proceedings, Jamaica ff.35–38.

[163] TT, John Cane (ed.), *The Publick Intelligencer, 8 September–15 September 1656*, London, 78:E497[19], p.834.

The troop played no real role on Hispaniola where those present would have fought on foot, but they were extremely active on Jamaica in 1655–1656 and they accompanied all of the raids the English made against the Spanish. They also were able to retain a consistent strength throughout 1656, most likely recruiting men from the infantry as well as utilising locally captured horses.[166] On 27 March Jones' troop had a ration strength of 43, on 28 May 53, on 30 July 45, 10 September 51 and 2 December 31.[167] Van Alfvan's troop (probably only raised in January/February 1656), on 15 March consisted of 35 men but seems to have been reduced shortly afterwards.[168] In October 1657 the troop, by now well recruited, consisted of 93 men.[169] A troop of horse was still in existence in 1662 when the army disbanded and numbered 64 officers and was then commanded by Captain Nelson, also a trooper when the troop left England in 1654.[170]

Also included in the army was a unit of *reformadoes*. These were officers who had retained their rank but who had no specific field command in an army and who formed a flexible unit of their own. With the political and religious purges of the army before and after the execution of Charles I there was a significant cadre of experienced officers with no commissions, a situation that increased with the downsizing of the army after 1651. As such Venables had no problem finding the hundred *reformadoes* he was instructed to take with him. Initially the establishment allowed for only 40 but on 21 November 1654 the Council of State granted money to pay for a further 60 more.[171]

At least 27 *reformadoes* drew pay in England prior to embarking.[172] At the March muster in Barbados two officers and 100 'souldiers' were recorded who formed a considerable fighting force that fought valiantly, but were ultimately virtually wiped out in the fighting on 26 April 1655 on Hispaniola, when they also lost their colours.[173] From the partial list extant of names for the *reformadoes* it has not been possible to positively identify most of them and so no analysis of their previous service can be made. Samuel Sutton is the only one that can be identified and he seems to have survived the disaster on Hispaniola, and was appointed ensign to Major Read, in Doyley's own regiment, in early 1656.[174]

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[164] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.89; BL, Add Ms 12423, Edward Doyley's Journal.

[165] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.122.

[166] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.41.

[167] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.112.

[168] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.51.

[169] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part Two', p.79.

[170] Long, *Jamaica*, Vol. 1, p.614; BL, Egerton Ms 2395, Order of the King in Council for the payment of the army in Jamaica, followed by a detailed account of a day's pay, f.351.

[171] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.398.

[172] TNA, CO1/32, f.55.

[173] TNA, CO1/32, f.55; Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.122; Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

The artillery was commanded by Captain Thomas Hughes, 'Controler of Ordnance',[175] though it is difficult to ascertain exactly what artillery the army took with it. Certainly '4 Small drakes' were to be issued to Venables on 30 November 1654 as was 'An Iron Morter'.[176] The only mentioned usage of artillery was during the second attempt on San Domingo when a single mortar was landed but never seems to have been fired. It was left behind when the English hurriedly evacuated the island. Some artillery was captured in Jamaica and during later raids along the Spanish Main which was used in the various forts that the English built.

There was a small company of firelocks commanded by Captain Pawlett that was routed at the second engagement on Hispaniola and its commander killed, but little else is known about it. Pawlett might be the same as Captain Pawley who was in Venables' regiment at the March muster in Barbados.[177]

As with most armies, Venables had a large staff with him. These included:[178]

John Cudworth – Judge Advocate
John Dean – Marshall General
Mark Fowler and Thomas Goodfellow – Provost Marshals
Robert Wadeson – Treasurer
Philip Warde – Adjutant General
John Rudyard – Quartermaster General
William Brigham – Clerk to the Commissary
John Danill – Secretary to the Judge Advocate
Rich Fletewood – 'Comissary Admonicon'
Edward James – Clerk to the Commissary
Rich Povey – 'Commissary of Stores provicon'[179]
J Berkenhead – Scoutmaster.

Once the army arrived in the West Indies at the end of January 1655 two additional regiments were raised. One was raised solely in Barbados, originally under the command of a local planter, Lewis Morris, who had been recommended by Riccard's committee. Lewis had probably served in the Parliamentarian armies during the Civil War. He certainly accompanied Ayscue to Barbados in 1651 and had fought at the taking of the Scilly Isles en route, where he had distinguished himself, but had possibly already a

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[174] TNA, CO1/32, f.56; BL, Add Ms 12423, Edward Doyley's Journal.

[175] TNA, CO1/32, f.55; Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.82.

[176] TNA, WO49/87, Ordnance Office: Debenture Books, 1654–1655, ff.12, 15.

[177] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.133.

[178] TNA, CO1/32, f.55.

[179] Brother of Thomas Povey, the colonial architect. He played an important administrative role in the early years of the colony, becoming Secretary to the Jamaica Council until at least 1670. See W. Noel Sainsbury (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1669–1674* (London: Longman and Co, 1889), p.61.

Barbados connection prior to this. It is possible that Morris was in fact in England in December 1654 and accompanied Venables when he departed and had already been selected to command the regiment to be raised once Barbados was reached. Certainly it is recorded that his lieutenant colonel, Robert Rous, was with the army when he was authorised to draw pay in December.[180] The Rous family had long connections with the West Indies and also the Provident Island colony whilst one member even sat on the Council of State at the time.

When Morris refused to accompany the expedition unless his debts were paid off, the regiment was taken over by Edward Doyley, Venables' own lieutenant colonel. From Aldbourne, Wiltshire, Doyley was to distinguish himself as an able administrator and a capable officer in Jamaica. He served the Parliamentarian cause throughout the Civil War as well as in Ireland in Colonel Algernon Sidney's regiment of horse.[181] He acted as a de facto governor of Jamaica on three occasions (after the deaths of Fortescue, Sedgwick and Brayne) and was later appointed in his own right by Charles II. He successfully led the English defence of the island in 1657 and 1658 when the Spanish attempted to retake it. He returned to England 1662 and died in 1675.[182]

At the muster in Barbados in March 1655,[183] the regiment consisted of the following companies:

Colonel Doyley
Lieutenant Colonel Francis Mercer
Major John Read[184]
Captain Thomas Thornhill
Captain Noell
Captain Smith
Captain Richard Stevens
Captain Vavaster [Vavasour][185]
Captain Augustine Thornehill
Captain Downes

Previously major of Venables' own regiment, Mercer had be a lieutenant in Skippon's regiment in 1650[186] and then seems to have been appointed captain in Oliver Cromwell's own foot regiment when it was raised later in 1650.[187] Mercer was paid 50*l* for 'carriage of the arms of the Lord General's foot regiment into the north' that year.[188] Interestingly another captain at the time in Cromwell's regiment was John Hodgeson who was a known associate of Nathaniel Bowers of Carter's regiment and so they must have known each other. Cromwell's regiment was quartered in London in late 1654 when the nucleus of Venables' army was raised, and he might well have been drawn out directly from the Lord Protector's regiment. He was still alive in September 1656 when he led a raid up the Rio Minho in Jamaica and then in October 1656 he took Doyley's regiment to Ayala to secure the eastern part of the island prior to the arrival of Nevis settlers.[189] What became of him after is not known. A Francis Mercer was a captain in Moss's regiment back in England in 1659.[190] The fact that when the regiment was disbanded in 1662 it was commanded by Colonel Thomas Lynch,[191] suggests Mercer had either returned to England or died by then.

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[180] TT, John Hall (ed.), *Mercurius Politicus, 8–15 May 1651*, E.628[17], p.794; Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.654.

[181] Firth and Davis, *Regimental History*, Vol. 2, p.713.

[182] Natalie Zacek, *Edward Doyley (1617–1675)*, *ODNB*.

[183] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.121.

[184] Believed to have died around April 1656.

[185] Still alive in September 1656.

[186] Wanklyn, *NMA* Vol. 1, p.127.

[187] Wanklyn, *NMA* Vol. 2, p.78.

[188] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD 1650*, p.582.

Richard Stevens later became major of the regiment and distinguished himself at the Battle of Ocho Rios in 1657.[192] On 12 April 1656 Thomas Huddlestone was appointed lieutenant in Captain Ryley's company. When the army departed England he had been a private soldier in Mercer's company in Venables' regiment. On the same day John Hobbey was appointed ensign in Mercer's own company of Doyley's regiment. When Hobbey had left England the year before he had been a sergeant in Corbitt's company in Buller's regiment.[193] Likewise John Frampton, who in December 1654 had been quartermaster to Venables' own regiment, might be the Lieutenant Frampton of Doyley's regiment who took part in the raid led by Mercer himself in September 1656.[194] Even though the regiment was raised in Barbados it certainly included soldiers drafted in from the English raised regiments, though the majority of the ordinary soldiers would presumably have been raised locally.

Nothing is known of the other officers listed. It is not known if these officers came from England or were recruited in Barbados. If the latter, and assuming they had prior military experience, it is conceivable that some of them (or indeed some of the ordinary soldiers) had fought for the Royalist cause during the Civil War and then fled to Barbados, as many had. Other known officers who served in the regiment included Captains Poole, Augustine,[195] Sanderson, Ward, Sininsby(?), Lieutenants John Thornborough, Anthony Price and Mark Flower.[196] Also ensigns Thomas Hoblethwaite and Thomas Rust (who was appointed on 4 June 1656 and took part in Mercer's raid three months later).[197]

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[189] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', pp.88, 94.

[190] Wanklyn, *NMA* Vol. 2, p.118.

[191] Long, *Jamaica*, Vol. 1, p.614.

[192] TT, Edward Doyley, *A narrative of the great success God hath been pleased to give His Highness forces in Jamaica, against the King of Spains forces; together with a true relation of the Spaniards losing their plate-fleet, as it was communicated in a letter from the Governour of Jamaica*, 1658, 142:E.948[5].

[193] BL, Add Ms 12423, Edward Doyley's Journal; TNA, CO1/32, f.56.

[194] TNA, CO 1/32, f.56; Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.88.

[195] Probably dead by January 1656.

[196] BL, Add Ms 12423, Edward Doyley's Journal.

[197] BL, Add Ms 12423, Edward Doyley's Journal; Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.88.

In March 1655 the regiment numbered 956 officers and men.[198] At the November 1655 muster it comprised 265 well men, 461 sick with 35 women and children.[199] On 6 March 1656 the regiment had a ration strength of 615, by 16 April it was at 572, on 20 August it was 545 and on 2 December 525.[200]

On 27 January 1656 the regiment was ordered to move the Black River area, near Santiago, in anticipation of a Spanish landing. On 10 October Mercer was ordered to take part of the regiment to the Ayala area and 'there to settle and plant yourselves and ye souldiers with you'. They were further instructed to assist the soon to arrive settlers from Nevis 'with your utmost endeavour against any enemie'.[201] The regiment was still quartered in Ayala and Morant (as well as some men in Port Royal) when the regiment was disbanded in 1662, when it numbered 362 officers and men. It was most likely merged with Brayne's and Moore's regiments after May 1659.[202]

Very little is known about Richard Holdip's regiment, which was recruited from men of the English islands of St. Christopher, Nevis and Montserrat.[203] Holdip himself was a Barbadian planter of some experience and was very much trusted by Venables, and he played a prominent part in the negotiations with the Spanish in Jamaica when the English arrived, much to the annoyance of the other army officers.[204] Butler had nothing good to say about him, calling him the 'enemye of all good', believing that he deliberately recruited more men in the Leeward Islands than were either needed or had provisions and equipment for, just in the hope of being appointed commander of that regiment, but that he 'never merrited a companey'.[205] In June 1656 Holdip was accused of 'detainning the dues of the regiment' and was dismissed from the army.[206]

The regiment numbered around 1,200 officers and men when raised; no officer list survives, although Charles Glapthorne, previously a lieutenant in Buller's regiment, was to claim in July 1656 that he had been a captain in the regiment.[207] It was a short-lived regiment that was reduced, possibly as early as June 1655 but certainly by 23 July.[208] It landed with Buller's force at Hispaniola but seems to have played little or no role in the attempts on San Domingo. Being the first regiment to be reduced to make up the strength of other regiments would suggest that it was not perceived by Venables to be of much use, perhaps not surprisingly given its hasty recruitment. Michael Bland, major in Buller's regiment, was appointed its lieutenant colonel on 30 April 1655 whilst still on Hispaniola, whilst his son, James, was made

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[198] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.121.

[199] TNA, CO1/32, f.131.

[200] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', p.112.

[201] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', pp.44, 94.

[202] Long, *Jamaica*, Vol. 1, p.614; Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part Three', p.120. BL, Egerton Ms 2395, Order of the King in Council for the payment of the army in Jamaica, followed by a detailed account of a day's pay, f.351.

[203] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.158.

[204] Timothy Venning, *Cromwellian Foreign Policy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), p.80.

[205] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.754.

[206] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.152.

[207] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1656–7*, p.29.

[208] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1656–7*, p.29.

'Ensign to his father' the same day. On 15 May James Holdip, presumably a relative of the colonel, was appointed ensign to Captain Clap Thorne in the regiment.[209] Other than these appointments nothing is known of the officers in the regiment. On 18 July 1656, a statement signed by some of the army's senior officers whilst Venables was incapacitated singled out the regiment as 'to bee reduced'. When this actually happened is uncertain, but it was most likely soon afterwards, and it was no longer in existence as a formation at the time of the November muster.[210]

None of the English accounts had anything good to say about the quality of the soldiers raised in the West Indies. Venables summed up all their feelings when he wrote:

> Our planters we found most fearful, being only bold to do mischief, not to be commanded as Soldiers, nor to be kept in any civil order; being the most propane debauched persons that we ever saw, scorners of Religion, and indeed men kept so loose as not to be kept under discipline, and so cowardly as not to be made to fight; so that had we known what they would have prov'd, we should rather have chosen to have gone ourselves, as we came from England, than have taken in such to our assistance.[211]

Writing of the debacle on Hispaniola to Searle, the Commissioners (less Venables) commented, 'to say the truth your Men and the Men of St. Christopher lead all the disorder and confusion'.[212]

Also raised in Barbados was a troop of horse under the command of Captain James Heane (son of Major General Heane) and after his death by Captain Carter. At the muster in March 1655 it numbered (including a part of Jones' troop) only 65 troopers and 12 officers. On 23 March it was issued with the seemingly large quantity of 14 trumpets.[213] Nothing is further heard of the troop other than the death of its commander on Hispaniola where he seems to have fought on foot.[214] Most likely, as virtually no horses were transported after the evacuation from Hispaniola, it was disbanded and those troopers that survived must have been integrated into Jones' troop on Jamaica once he arrived.

Three further regiments were raised in England and sent to Jamaica in 1655 and 1656 as reinforcements but as none of these played any role in the military campaign on 1655 their formation and subsequent history will be discussed in Volume 2.

On paper this was an impressive army. The formal establishment for the army no longer exists, but according to Penn's commission the army when it left England was to consist of five infantry regiments of 600 men each and a troop of 60 (later 100) horse plus the train of artillery and staff officers.[215] However the army was known to be understrength when it left England and so was probably only around 2,500 men strong. At the March muster in Barbados it mustered around 6,900 officers and men excluding Holdip's regiment of possibly 1,000–1,200 men. When the Sea Regiment was added on Hispaniola the total strength of the army was in excess of 9,000 men. Probably only a quarter of these were experienced, however. Nonetheless it was most likely the most powerful force the state of England had ever dispatched overseas. Much was expected from it but events were to prove it was not equal to the task given to it.

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[209] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.125–126.

[210] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.661; TNA, CO1/32, f.130.

[211] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.30.

[212] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.30.

[213] HMC, *Portland Part Two*, Vol. 2, p.90.

[214] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.122; Anon., *The present state of Jamaica with the life of the great Columbus the first discoverer: to which is added an exact account of Sir Hen. Morgan's voyage to, and famous siege and taking of Panama from the Spaniards* (London: 1683), p.30.

As with all armies the calibre and experience of the officers would determine its effectiveness in battle. With a large army at his disposal it could be assumed that Cromwell would be spoilt for choice as to which officers were selected to join Venables' army. In reality it was not that simple. The army in Ireland and Scotland was on constant active service and so it was impractical to select officers from these forces. The army in England was reasonably small and was needed to prevent any Royalist uprising and maintain order and it was thus essential that officers who were politically, ideologically and religiously reliable were retained there as well. Therefore for the most part Cromwell looked to the large numbers of unemployed officers to fill positions in the army.

Venables and Heane were the two most high profile exceptions to this, as both were appointed from serving units. How the other officers were selected is not known but undoubtedly patronage and connections played a big part in getting selected. It was no secret during the summer and autumn of 1654 that a new army was being prepared and that large numbers of officers would be required. No doubt those aspiring to be appointed made their interests known to those persons they knew that might have some influence or contacts with the army command in London. Many saw it as an opportunity to get their pay arrears settled before agreeing to serve once again, as indeed Venables, Heane and Fortescue all did. At the end of the First Civil War the officers in the army had split between the moderates (generally Presbyterian) who sided with Parliament in its tussle with reducing the army quickly and curbing its political influence, and the more radical (and generally Independents) who wanted to see a greater role for the army in national politics and a voice in the post-war settlement. Officers like Fortescue had resigned from the army in 1647, preferring to side with Parliament rather than the radical elements in the army. He had been isolated ever since, and whilst a distinguished senior officer in the war he could find no place in the Independent-controlled army of the Protectorate. He was even arrested in 1651 for involvement in a minor Presbyterian conspiracy. Marginalised and ignored, he would never be considered for a position in the main English army and so Venables' army gave him the opportunity to serve once again and thereby provide him the opportunity to petition (and actually be heard) for his pay arrears.[216] His few letters that have survived suggest that he was in financial difficulties in 1654 and so joining this army was perhaps seen as his way to relieve his deprived circumstances. Perhaps officers with similar military experience as Fortescue, such as Archbould, Bowers and Bushell, were also Presbyterians as none of them appear in army lists post-1647 and so this might also have been the opportunity they needed to serve again to restore their finances. Some officers had been overlooked due to their own previous failings, and the recruiting of Venables' army gave them a second chance to redeem their reputations. Buller had no permanent employment since being surprised by a Royalist revolt on the Isles of Scilly in 1648 and lost the islands. Carter had been forced to resign his commission in July 1651 rather than be subjected to a court martial for his constant drinking, and so this provided him with the chance to make amends.

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[215] Penn, *Memorials*, p.23.

Others probably used their connections to obtain a position in the army. Francis Barrington's cousin John was groom to the Lord Protector's Bedchamber and so had access to Cromwell's inner circle, and most likely used this to get an appointment. Carter would have been known personally to John Lambert, the influential member of Cromwell's Council of State, as would Nathaniel Bowers. Both of them had served in Lambert's regiment in the North. Stroud Bingham was the son of Heane's first regimental commander and had also served in Jersey with Heane, as had John Filkin. Francis Mercer had been a company commander in Oliver Cromwell's own infantry regiment when it was raised in 1650 and so would have been personally known to the Lord Protector, a connection that would not have harmed his selection prospects. James Heane, who was given command of the troop of horse in Barbados, was the son of Richard Heane whilst James Bland was made Ensign to his father's company on 30 April on Hispaniola. In both cases it is hard to see that the influence of their fathers was not exercised to get them these appointments. Whilst it is impossible to prove whether these officers owed their appointments solely to these connections, it is known that patronage played a significant role in army appointments at the time, and so it is plausible that they did. Nepotism even played a role in the appointment of some, albeit in this case in fleet, when Cromwell himself urged Penn to appoint two of his kinsmen to suitable positions and similar requests might well have been made of Venables.[217]

Some of the officers, having served during the civil wars, had been reduced and were working as civilians for the government. Richard Bamford (Heane) was employed by the Committee for Compounding with Delinquents before securing a commission, whilst Christopher Ennis was working in the Palace of Westminster before receiving his commission in John Humphrey's regiment which was raised in 1655 as reinforcement for Venables. Already working within the government they were certainly able to find out how to put themselves forward for selection before many others were able to. Venables, who later complained of the poor quality of many of the officers, noted that he had no involvement in the selection of them but added that 'no Officers were taken on but such as had the Commendation of some of his Highness Council, Chief Ministers of State, or Officers of the Army (and I could do no more), the Letters of recommendation left in Secretary Malins [William Malyn, Cromwell's private secretary] hands.'[218] How the junior officers were selected is again unknown. Many no doubt came from the regiments around London that provided drafts for the new regiments, as would many of the sergeants and corporals.

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[216] Andrew James Hooper, *Richard Fortescue (d. 1655), ODNB.*

[217] HMC, *Portland Part Two*, Vol. 2, p.88.

A lack of evidence precludes any serious analysis of the motivations that led both officers and men to volunteer for Venables' army but a few general points can be made. Undoubtedly personal gain was a chief motivator for most of the soldiers. Even though the destination of the expedition was unknown to most of those involved until after the army left England, it was widely believed that it would be overseas and with that brought the hope that plunder on a scale not seen during the wars in Britain might be gained. Even the lowest soldier could get lucky in the sack of an enemy town or by stripping the dead on the field of battle, and so thoughts of plunder were no doubt at the forefront of many of the men's minds. Their response to being told just as they landed on Hispaniola that no plunder was to be taken sent shockwaves through the army and led to a near mutiny, such was the expectation that plunder would be granted. Pay was another motivator of course, but all the old soldiers and many of the new ones would have known irregular pay was the norm in the English armies of the day, though they did at least receive part of it which for many was better than nothing. Some no doubt enlisted with a hope to gain glory for themselves or their country. But most probably enlisted for the same reasons that men have always joined an army – employment, pay and regular provisions which were necessities not always available to them in civilian life.

How experienced were the army officers that led the English army when it left England? Of the five regimental commanders Fortescue was the most experienced, having commanded a regiment from since 1642, although he had been forced out from the army temporarily for his religious beliefs. Venables had also served throughout the Civil War as both a field and garrison commander whilst he gained extensive experience of independent command in Ireland. Likewise Heane had experience of independent command in Jersey as well as of army–navy cooperation, as had Buller who had previously been governor of the Scilly Isles. Carter, probably the least experienced of the regimental commanders, had served in John Bright's regiment based in the North of England after the Civil War had ended (and most likely during as well) and was for a time governor of Clifford's Tower in York.[219] As such each regimental commander could boast many years' continuous service of at least the rank of colonel (except Carter) prior to their appointments in Venables' army, and perhaps could have been reasonably expected to be able to perform their roles to an acceptable standard. However, only Venables and Fortescue could claim significant, and continuous, active service campaigning in the field as both Heane and Buller had little experience of serving in multiple campaigns.

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[218] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.91.

[219] Wanklyn, *NMA* Vol. 1, p.158.

Venables, as the army commander, would have had little involvement in the command of his own regiment, which was commanded by Doyley until March 1655. Almost nothing is known of Doyley's previous military experience but he did serve during the war and later he proved himself to be a competent administrator in Jamaica and he showed significant military competence leading the English forces at the Battle of Rio Nuevo in 1658, and so it can be assumed that Venables' regiment would have been well led during Doyley's brief tenure as commander. Even less is known about Philip Ward, who took over command of the regiment after Venables' departure from Jamaica. He played an active part in the Council of Officers after it was formed at the end of 1655 and for this point alone it can be surmised that he was not without ability. Heane, as Major General, would also have had little time to command his own regiment which would have been left to Lieutenant Colonel John Clarke.[220] Clarke had served as a unit commander during the capture of the Channel Islands and later in Ireland. Little can be surmised of his effectiveness as a commander as he died of wounds received on Hispaniola (but this perhaps points to his personal bravery). Nothing at all is known about the previous experience of Holdip, Fortescue's second in command, or little about Bushell other than that he did serve during the Civil War, Carter's second in command. The opposite is the case for Buller's second in command Francis Barrington, whose extensive career can be well traced.

Of the four known majors who left England with the army, nothing is known of Barry's experience. He did return to England and held senior command in the army of 1660.[221] Bland had served throughout the Civil War and then in Phayre's regiment in Ireland in 1649. After returning to England from Jamaica in 1658 he also served in the 1660 army.[222] Ferguson might have been company commander in Harley's regiment in 1645, and if this is the case he would also have served in Essex's army prior to the formation of the New Model Army.[223] Mercer probably served as company commander in the infantry regiment of Oliver Cromwell in 1650 and also returned to England.[224] Therefore it is clear that of the senior commissioned officers Venables took with him to the West Indies nearly all were experienced officers, many having fought throughout the Civil War, in Ireland and in Scotland, and so it cannot be said that these senior officers lacked the experience required for such positions.

The same cannot be said of the company commanders or junior officers who accompanied the army from England. Of the 35 known captains, only Archbould (Heane), Bamford (Heane), Toms (Heane), Willett (Heane), Bower (Carter), Filkins (Carter) and White (Fortescue) can be positively identified as having previously served as a company commander prior to departing England in 1654, whilst Bingham (Buller) had served as an ensign since at least 1651. None of the ensigns' or lieutenants' previous service (if any) can be identified. Whilst some, perhaps many, of them had previously served as sergeants or corporals, and some had probably served in these ranks in the army prior to transfer to Venables' force, it is clear that his junior officer corps lacked experience. Given the high mortality rate faced by both senior officers and company commanders in the campaign, this lack of experience was to prove problematic as the army struggled to replace those that died with men of known capabilities.

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[220] Wanklyn, *NMA* Vol. 2, p.218.

[221] Wanklyn, *NMA* Vol. 2, pp.133, 152.

[222] Wanklyn, *NMA* Vol. 2, pp.137, 156, 182, 203.

[223] Wanklyn, *NMA* Vol. 1, pp.147, 58.

[224] Wanklyn, *NMA* Vol. 2, pp.78, 118.

Venables had little good to say about his officers. In a letter to Martin Noel from Jamaica in June 1655 he commented that he had 'Lazy dull Officers that have a large Portion of Pride, but not of Wit, Valour, or Activity; but this must not be made publick, though I desire my Lord may know it, but no more.'[225] In a letter written to Charles Fleetwood when incarcerated in the Tower of London in October 1655, he further disparaged the officers by commenting on the lack of control they had over the soldiers, saying that 'The Officers were so far from assisting that they rather endulged the Soldiers, never punishing Swearing nor drunkenness, but admonishing [them only].'[226] Upon accepting his command Venables was concerned about the quality of his soldiers. He asked that his army be drawn from the Irish Army 'seasoned with hardship and danger',[227] but his proposal was rejected because these men were destined to be settled in Ireland. He later wrote that he desired only soldiers who freely offered themselves from the old regiments, but any that offered were struck or punished by their officers, whilst 'the most abject in all companies, and raw fellows' were drafted purposely 'to save their old Blades'.[228] Venables described the soldiers from England and Barbados as being the 'the worst men either of England or the Plantation'.[229] On another occasion he wrote that the army consisted of 'unruly raw Soldiers, the major part, ignorant'.[230] Daniel How, a captain in Carter's regiment, believed 'those we carried out of England, we now find by sad experience that but few of them were old Soldiers, but certainly most of them were Apprentices that ran from their Masters, and others that came out of Bridewell, or one Gaol or another; so that in our poor Army we have few that either fear God or reverence Man'.[231] An army officer in Scotland was not surprised that Venables encountered difficulties when he opined in a letter to the General, 'you carried with you the very sweepings of some part of England'.[232]

Many of the English writers who witnessed the events on Hispaniola were quick to blame the poor quality of the soldiers for their defeat. This is perhaps a natural reaction as those in command sought to deflect blame from themselves. It would be an oversimplification to claim that the entire English rank and file were all poor soldiers and were to blame for the disaster.

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[225] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.50.

[226] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.84.

[227] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.6, 100.

[228] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.6.

[229] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.92.

[230] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.50.

[231] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.40–41.

[232] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.93.

Most likely they were a mixture of good, bad and indifferent. Despite the defeat on Hispaniola the army later showed that it had an ability to fight and fight well. After both ambushes outside of San Domingo the army did in fact rally and recover its ground, and certainly after the second one had Venables showed more spine in his leadership it is possible that a successful attack on the city could have been made. Despite Venables' claims that at the landing on Jamaica he was concerned that the army would refuse to fight (there is no evidence to support this claim) it is impossible to evaluate the army's military performance as there was no fighting, and by which time the army was being decimated by illness and so it is hardly surprising it was unable to protect itself from the limited Spanish attacks of March 1656. Once the army had recovered its health in 1657 it demonstrated skill and bravery both at Los Chorreras and Rio Neuvo, and so it was, even then, a force to be reckoned with (at least compared to the Spaniards).

The recruits raised in Barbados and the Leeward Islands, were however pretty abject. With little training, poorly equipped and without motivation they did little but make up the numbers. Venables later put much of the blame for the disaster upon Hispaniola upon the soldiers of the islands when he later wrote that they were 'being only bold to do mischief, not to be commanded as Souldiers, nor kept in any civil order; being the most prophane debauch'd persons that we ever saw, scorners of Religion, and indeed men kept so loose as not to be kept under discipline, and so cowardly as not to be made to fight.' He added that he would have been better off not recruiting any of them, but rather 'gone ourselves, as we came from England' for their inclusion in his army 'have drawn this heavy affliction upon us' and brought 'dishonour to our Nation and Religion.'[233] Holdip's Leeward island regiment was disbanded almost immediately after it arrived in Jamaica, but Doyley's was not and in fact it remained in existence until the army was disbanded in 1662. This surely illustrates the perceived value and effectiveness of both regiments throughout the campaign although Doyley's undoubtedly benefited from being the regiment of the army commander and from absorbing soldiers from the disbanded regiments. Daniel How made the comment that the locally raised forces 'for the most part [they] prov'd good for little; I dare say that one Thousand of our Soldiers that came out of England or Ireland is better than five Thousand of them, for they have been for the most part such old beaten runaways as that they know how to do little else except to Plunder.'[234]

Each of the infantry regiments was organised in the traditional manner of the English armies of the time with a colonel, lieutenant colonel, major and number of captains all commanding companies. Two of the regiments that left England seem to have had 11 companies, whilst the other two had 10. The Barbados regiment also had 10. In each company there were two field officers, a lieutenant (or captain-lieutenant in the case of the colonel's company) and ensign that carried the company standard. There was a selection of sergeants and corporals who were uncommissioned and who commanded smaller subdivisions of the company that was divided into files of about six men each. A full strength company would have mustered around 120 men but it is doubtful if any were ever were that strong. Most would have been lucky if they had half that many after departing Barbados. Due to the high mortality rate suffered by the foot regiments in 1655 it was decided in January 1656 at a council of officers 'that in regards of the weakness of the regiments two companies of every regiment should be reduced and the Captains and other officers disposed of where they should be wanting in other regiments'. This was duly undertaken and it necessitated transferring Captain-Lieutenant Rudiger (Venables) to Doyley's regiment,[235] and captains William Mallet (Fortescue) and Kettle (Buller) to John Humphrey's regiment, which regiments had arrived as reinforcements in October the previous year. Captain Pegg (Venables) was transferred to Holdip's regiment.[236]

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[233] Firth (ed,), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.30.

[234] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.40.

Whilst Venables was preparing his army, William Penn was making his fleet ready to receive them in Portsmouth.

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[235] He was promoted to full captain in Doyley's regiment on 29 January 1656. See BL, Add Ms 12423, Edward Doyley's Journal.

[236] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', pp.43, 44.

4

The English Navy in the West Indies 1654–1655

The English navy[1] was, not surprisingly, to play a prominent role in the Anglo-Spanish War, both in the West Indies and in Europe. In the West Indies, apart from transporting the army from England, it had the crucial role of providing the English forces with provisions, mainly from England but also from New England. It was the conduit through which all communication with the government at home flowed, it gathered intelligence locally for the English commanders on Spanish defences and fleet movements in the region and it would provide a powerful defence should the Spanish mount a seaborne attempt to reconquer any territory taken off them whilst its very presence in the Caribbean projected English might and acted as a deterrent against Spanish reprisal. Furthermore it was essential for transporting and supporting the army during its land-based operations. That the navy proved capable of fulfilling this role is a testament on how far it had come from the incompetence and mismanagement of the Stuart era.

The English navy had been in decline throughout the first half of the seventeenth century after the glory days of the Elizabethan era. Under the Stuarts and despite their personal involvement, or perhaps because of it, the navy had been severely mismanaged and enormous sums of money had been wasted or misappropriated. The decline was such that when Charles I attacked Cadiz in 1625 and attempted to lift the siege of La Rochelle in 1627–1629 the navy performed poorly, much to the humiliation of the English government. During his personal rule Charles lavished great sums on the navy through the ship money levy, but still the decline continued. With the election of the Long Parliament in 1640 command of the navy gradually shifted away from the King and into the control of Parliament. Much of the rampant corruption and incompetent management was eradicated and the pay of the sailors increased so as to incentivise recruitment. It was a great personal blow to the King when the navy, now under the command of the Puritan Earl of Warwick, declared for Parliament in the summer of 1642. Whilst it only played a supporting role during the Civil War itself, control of the seas was to prove of significant benefit to Parliament as it stifled any potential overseas aid for the Royalist cause.[2]

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[1] Throughout this work the term *Navy* is defined as the entire resources of the English state for conducting military operations at sea. *Fleet* is used to define a large grouping of naval vessels under the independent command of a General-at-Sea. A *squadron* is a smaller grouping of vessels of mixed rates under the command of flag officer. A *flotilla* is a small group of vessels detached from a squadron to perform a specific task for a limited duration.

The re-emergence of the navy as a potent force was demonstrated with the logistical efficiency it showed in supporting firstly the English campaign in Ireland in 1649 and secondly the invasion of Scotland in 1650. On both occasions the navy played a major role in the combined operations in a way that would have been impossible under the Stuart kings. This resurgence of strength, capability and competence of the navy inevitably led to friction with the maritime Dutch Republic which had steadily grown its own navy and overseas trading interests at the expense of the English throughout the century. Conflict seemed to be inevitable and war broke out between the two in 1652.[3]

The navy had three distinct administrative sections: the Admiralty, the Navy Commissioners and Finance. Prior to 1645 sole command of the navy rested in the hands of the Lord High Admiral, appointed first by the sovereign and after 1642 by Parliament. The Lord High Admiral, through his office known as the Admiralty, was responsible for implementing the orders of the executive branch of government and ensure the navy was maintained, equipped and ready to undertake any service required of it by the State. The Lord High Admiral also had the authority to appoint officers and order the construction of new ships. He had the authority to divide the navy into separate fleets and squadrons under the command of flag-officers and to deploy them where they were needed. When the Parliamentarian Lord High Admiral, the Earl of Warwick, was forced to resign in 1645 under the terms of the Self-Denying Ordinance, the various powers vested in that office were transferred first to Vice admiral William Batten and then to Colonel Thomas Rainsborough although he was unable to stop elements of the navy mutinying and joining the Royalist cause in 1648. After the execution of Charles I in 1649 England became a republic with the executive branch of the national government embodied in a Council of State, elected from the members of Parliament, and to this Council were transferred the powers of the Lord High Admiral. This proved to be a cumbersome way to run the navy as the Council was always distracted by more important affairs of state, but it was reluctant to cede its powers to a more focused body that had the time and experience to manage naval matters full time. However, the defeat of the English navy at the Battle of Dungeness on 30 November 1652 by the Dutch highlighted the need for reform at the highest levels, and on 14 December Parliament created a committee known as the 'Commissioners for the ordering and managing the affairs of the Admiralty and Navy'. These Admiralty commissioners, responsible to Parliament and the Council of State, included the newly created generals-at-sea, as well as political and administrative appointees who were selected, and removed, by Parliament and later by the Protectorate Council of State, and held the responsibility for command of the navy until the Restoration in 1660.[4]

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[2] See Thrush, 'The Navy Under Charles I', for a detailed study on the decline of the Navy under the Stuarts.

[3] See Michael Oppenheim, *A history of the administration of the royal navy and of merchant shipping in relation to the navy, from MDIX to MDCLX, with an introduction treating of the preceding period*, Vol. 1 (London: 1896); Capp, *Cromwell's Navy*, for a description of the growth of the Navy during the Commonwealth in general; Barratt, *Cromwell's Wars At Sea*, for the Navy's role in the Dutch War. See also Davies, *Pepys's Navy: Ships, Men & Warfare, 1649–1689* for a modern study of the navy in the second half of the seventeenth century.

The navy commissioners, who received instruction from the Lord High Admiral and later the Admiralty commissioners, were a group of able and experienced individuals who were responsible for building, maintaining, manning and victualling the navy. These administrators played the vital role of ensuring that the navy and the multitude of vessels it comprised were ready for deployment, with all the stores and men required, when needed. The navy commissioners also prepared cost estimates for the summer and winter guards, as well as the ordinary and extraordinary expenses based on the requirements of service determined by Parliament and the Council of State. These were then provided to Parliament, who approved them and specified which branches of the public revenue were to provide the necessary funds and which then transferred, at least in theory, sufficient money to the navy treasury for disbursement. The navy treasurer, who played the leading role in prioritising payments and processing all disbursements, was Richard Hutchinson and he held this role from 1650 until the Restoration.[5] Navy expenditure throughout the Civil War years remained relatively constant at around 300,000*l* per annum,[6] but steadily grew from 1648 onwards when the navy was engaged first in chasing the fleet of Prince Rupert and then in the Dutch and Spanish Wars. In 1653, at the height of the Dutch war, the navy was costing the State in excess of 1,100,000*l* per annum.[7] In 1655 the Naval commissioners estimated the costs to be slightly under 1,000,000*l* to keep both Blake's and Penn's fleets at sea, maintain the summer guard and pay off debts and bills for provisions.[8] These annual costs did not change significantly for the rest of the decade.

Traditionally the majority of funding for the English navy had come from the receipts of customs, that is the tax paid on goods imported and exported into and out of the country. This funding was supplemented by the sale of any prize goods disposed of by the navy, as well as money from the sale of unwanted navy supplies or equipment. During the Civil War years an excise levy was raised on the domestic sale of alcohol and some other goods, and this produced additional funds from which the navy was able to draw from time to time. As navy expenditure grew during the Commonwealth period further revenue was needed to meet the needs of both the navy and the army. Proceeds from the sale of delinquent and royal estates provided limited relief and so by 1652 the navy was required to receive part of the monthly assessment that was levied across the country for the maintenance of the army.[9]

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[4] Alfred C. Dewar, 'The Naval Adminstration of the Interregnum 1641–59', *The Mariner's Mirror*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (1926), pp.417–423.

[5] W.N. Hammond, 'The Administration of the English Navy, 1649–1660' (PhD Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1974), pp.77–78, 80.

[6] Hammond, 'English Navy', p.86.

[7] Oppenheim, 'Commonwealth Navy', p.73.

[8] Hammond, 'English Navy', p.98.

Despite these attempts to acquire new funding sources there was still insufficient money available to fully cover the expenses of the navy throughout the Anglo-Spanish War. Debt mounted as Hutchison was unable to pay all the demands made upon him, and so he prioritised and juggled the payments as best he could. Ready money was needed to maintain and equip the vessels themselves and so these associated costs were paid first, which inevitably meant that the navy victuallers, who were the private contractors that provided food and supplies for the ships, had their payment terms stretched. By 1660 it was not uncommon for bills to remain unpaid 12 months after submission by these contractors. Not surprisingly such delays in payment meant many of the contractors, especially the larger ones, were unwilling to enter into future contracts with the navy unless their arrears were paid off but also they significantly increased their charges to the navy to cover their exposure due to the delays in payment. Finding it harder to deal with the larger contractors for mass orders, the navy turned to smaller contractors who lacked the finances and the capacity to handle such volumes and so quality deteriorated further, delays in delivery became longer whilst claims for bankruptcy amongst these smaller contractors grew. Inevitably this all impacted on the navy's ability to operate, especially during the last years of the war, when supplies being sent out to Jamaica became more and more erratic.[10]

The payment of seamen's wages also suffered due to this general shortage of money. Wages only needed paying once a ship returned to port after a period of service and the crew were 'paid off'. Each seaman received a certificate that recorded the amount in wages he was due and which he took to the navy treasury officials in the port to obtain the cash. Due to the overall shortage of money it was common for the sailors to only obtain a part of their pay when they presented their certificates and they needed to wait for the balance, often for long periods, which created hardship for them as they needed the money to give to their families after such a long time at sea and for their personal living expenses. These delays naturally led to much discontent amongst the sailors, making it harder for the navy to re-engage them for future voyages. It also led to the sailors selling their certificates at much less than their worth, often to their officers or even members of the navy treasury office, so that they could get the ready cash immediately. These certificates could then be converted by the holder for cash in full later when money was available. Whilst it was a scheme that worked, the sailors of course felt they had been taken advantage of and their resentment grew and often led to mutiny, as the newly appointed commander of the *Marston Moor* was to experience at the end of 1655 when he was attempting to make the ship ready to return to Jamaica. The difficulty for sailors to get paid had been a perennial problem in the English navy for many years, but it became more acute during the Protectorate and it is of no surprise that many of the ordinary sailors saw that their only chance to get a reasonable return for their labour was through any plunder they were able to seize when on service. Not surprisingly the sailors in Penn's fleet were angered later when they were informed that there was to be no indiscriminate plundering and that all captured prize goods must be disposed of by the expedition commissioners for the benefit of the State. Nor is it surprising that attempts, frequently successful, were made to circumvent these instructions when the opportunity presented itself.[11]

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[9] Hammond, 'English Navy', p.93.

[10] Hammond, 'English Navy', pp.101–110.

Initially the State had been able to finance the war by juggling cash flow but by 1659 the country and the navy was virtually bankrupt and the cash shortage seriously impacted how the squadron that remained in Jamaica could be supplied. Now only a few vessels strong – this reduction in no small measure due to the inability of the navy to finance more, and the demand of the war in Europe – the English administration in Jamaica was forced to make its own arrangements locally to supply both the ships and the army and to maintain its offensive and defensive capabilities.

Under the Commonwealth and Protectorate command of the individual fleets at sea was given to the generals-at-sea, a role first introduced in February 1649 when army colonels Robert Blake, Edward Popham and Richard Deane were appointed by Parliament. By 1654 Popham and Deane had both died and they had been replaced by George Monck and William Penn, whilst John Desborough had also been appointed to the post but his command was purely administrative and he did not serve at sea but acted as conduit between the others and the government. Monck did serve at sea for a while but when he was appointed commander-in-chief of the English army in Scotland he retained his rank as a general-at-sea. As such it fell to Blake and Penn to command separate fleets at the commencement of the Anglo-Spanish War.[12]

The First Anglo-Dutch War, 1652–1654, was the first major war at sea that the English had fought since the reign of Elizabeth I. The English victory was achieved mainly as a result of the organisational reforms in command initiated after the defeat off Dungeness and their initial ability to raise sufficient revenue to massively increase the size and capabilities of the navy. Victory brought the Republican regime a form of legitimacy in the eyes of the powers in Europe, and a reputation that the English now had a powerful navy to match their seemingly invincible army. The navy then consisted of over 200 ships, with as many as 80 of them either built between 1652–1654 or being prizes converted for naval use during the war. For Cromwell victory in the Dutch War and the accumulation of such a powerful navy was due to God's Providence which had given the English '160 ships swimminge: most of Europe our enemyes except Holland, and that would be well considered also: we thinke our best consideration had to keep up this reputation and improve it to some good, and not lay them up by the walls.'[13] He wanted

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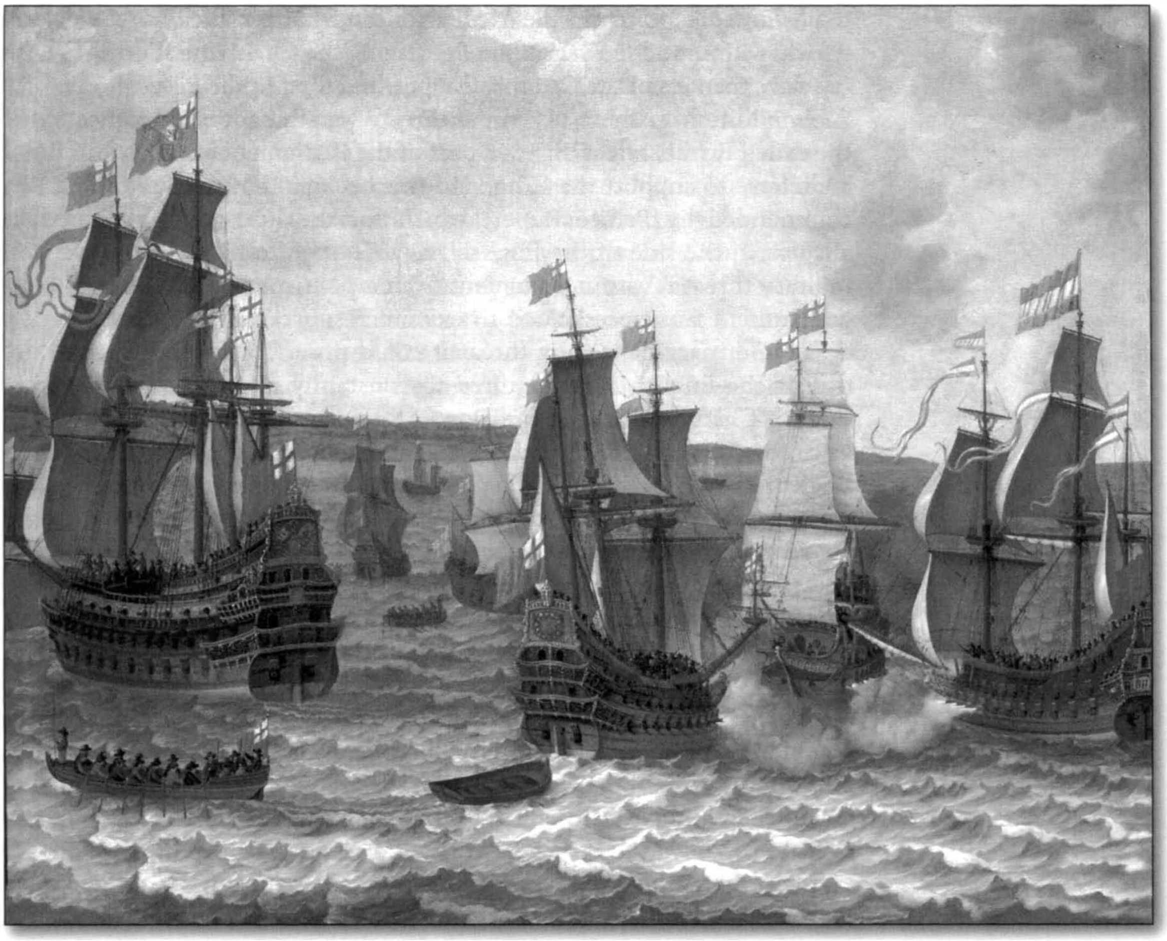
[11] Hammond, 'English Navy', pp.110–116.

[12] Dewar, 'Naval Administration'.

[13] Firth (ed.), *Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, pp.207–208.



Detail from Action Between Ships in the First Dutch War, 1652–54, c.1650s. Abraham Willaerts. (National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, Caird Collection BHC0823)

to assert England's newly founded dominance overseas and in the navy he believed he had the tool to achieve this aim.

However it was not fighting major wars at sea that occupied most of the navy's time and attention. In addition to ensuring the safety of the English coast the navy spent much of its time protecting English merchant vessels on the open seas. With the deterioration of relations with France since 1646, privateers based in and around the French ports were the scourge of the English Channel where they hoped to capture unsuspecting merchant vessels (of any nationality) to sell both the cargo and the vessel. With the commercial alliance with France that was signed in 1656 these French privateers were replaced by Spanish ones operating out of Dunkirk, and so policing the Channel was both a time-consuming and expensive operation for the English. In addition the French, Spanish and Dutch (prior to 1654) governments routinely issued 'letters of marque' which allowed their ships (naval or merchant) to capture any English vessel they came upon, even though no state of war officially existed between the nations. This tit-for-tat process worked both ways and so for much of the seventeenth century an unofficial war of attack and reprisal existed between the main maritime powers in Europe. Farther afield the infamous Barbary Pirates preyed on

English merchantmen in the Mediterranean Sea from their bases in North Africa, with the added variation of enslaving the Christian sailors for sale in the slave markets of the Ottoman Empire and the Middle East.

In addition to these perennial threats was the added complication of the exiled Royalist fleet. In 1648 part of the Parliamentarian fleet mutinied and chose to support the King, and this became the basis of a small fleet commanded by Prince Rupert which for the next four years became a thorn in the side of the English navy. Though too small to be any real military threat it was inconvenient from a political perspective and so the government was necessitated to expend resources and funds to track it down and marginalise any threat it could pose. To protect against these threats the English were required to constantly maintain a guard in the English Channel, based in the Downs Station at Deal, Kent. These vessels were intended to act as a deterrent and to provide close protection to English vessels plying the Channel. Squadrons or just individual ships were stationed at various other locations along the east and south coast on temporary or semi-permanent basis as required. Vessels were also occasionally dispatched and based in New England and the West Indies to protect English merchant vessels there whilst the fishing vessels operating of the Newfoundland coast also needed protection. Despite having a large navy, English resources were stretched thin.

At the end of the Dutch War the English had two fleets under the command of Robert Blake and William Penn, both based in Portsmouth, plus other vessels of the Downs Station watching the entrance to the English Channel and individual vessels at other stations dotted around the country or in one of the naval yards at Chatham, Woolwich, Deptford, Portsmouth or Plymouth were they would be undergoing refit and repair. It was Penn's and Blake's fleets which would take the lead in Cromwell's projecting of English power and influence abroad. Blake's fleet departed Portsmouth in October 1654 and proceeded to act in a belligerent manner towards both the Spanish and the French in an effort to put pressure on both nations to commit to an alliance with England. His fleet was later to play the dominant role in the Anglo-Spanish War once it formally broke out in Europe in October 1655.

William Penn's fleet was thus left to be used for the West Indies expedition, and it consisted of three squadrons. The first, commanded by Penn himself aboard his flagship the *Swiftsure*, the second commanded by Vice admiral William Goodsonn aboard the *Paragon* and the third under the Anabaptist radical, Rear Admiral George Dakins, aboard the *Torrington*.[14] Penn's entire fleet in December 1654 consisted of around 38 vessels, either purpose-built naval ships, merchantmen modified for navy use or converted prizes. In addition there were two ketches, one hoy and one dogger-boat called the *Adventure*. In total Penn commanded over 4,000 seamen.[15] In addition to these there were also numerous private merchant vessels hired by the State to assist in transporting the soldiers and stores to the West Indies.

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[14] Penn, *Memorials*, p.17.

[15] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.17–18; Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal', p.4; Hammond, 'English Navy', p.99.

Of these only 14 were purpose-built naval vessels, the rest being converted prizes or merchantmen. Penn's own flagship, the *Swiftsure*, was one of James I's 'great ships' which had been built at Deptford in 1621. It had been virtually rebuilt at Woolwich in 1654 and so was effectively brand new when Penn took command of it. Goodsonn's flagship, the *Paragon*, was another 'great ship' which been built in 1633 and christened the *Henrietta Maria* but renamed in 1650. Dakins' flagship, the frigate *Torrington*, was brand new having only been built in 1654. The oldest vessel in the fleet was the *Red Lion*, originally built in 1609 but rebuilt in 1640 and later renamed as the *Lion*.[16]

Prior to the Civil War the English navy tended to consist of large and heavily armed vessels such as the 1,522 ton *Sovereign of the Seas*, the *Swiftsure* or the *Henrietta Maria* and these were known as 'great ships'. These had been built for major fleet actions at sea but proved impractical during the Civil War when the role of the navy was primarily to support Parliamentarian coastal garrisons and block any attempts of the Royalists to bring supplies across the sea from Europe. They were also too unwieldy to stop the fast-moving privateer vessels operating in the Channel which preyed on shipping of any nationality. After the war, and with Parliament feeling more threatened by European nations than by the exiled Royalists, they began a shipbuilding programme to provide a more practical fleet than the one inherited from the Stuart kings. These new vessels were the first frigates. Smaller, lighter, narrower, with a shallower draught and less armament they were quick and easy to manoeuvre. Originally single-decked with a quarterdeck and no forecastle they soon became larger with two decks, a forecastle, quarterdeck and a poop deck – but they were still fast and reasonably powerful. This shipbuilding programme intensified during the Dutch War when the fleet more than doubled in size with over 30 new frigates built. Penn's fleet was to consist of many of these new frigates and they proved extremely useful in the Caribbean. The *Gloucester*, *Marston Moor*, and *Torrington* were all Speaker Class frigates built in 1654. The *Laurel* (1651) and *Pelican* (1650) were Elizabeth Class frigates while the *Dover* (1650) and *Portland* (1653) were Ruby Class frigates.[17]

The largest ship in Penn's fleet was the *Gloucester*, both in length (117 feet) and by gross tonnage (1,006 tons). The *Swiftsure* carried the largest complement of guns (60) whilst *Paragon*, *Marston Moor*, *Torrington* and *Gloucester* carried 54 each. The least well-armed (excluding the small 64-foot galley the *Martin*) were the *Grantham* and the *Selby* with 24 guns apiece.[18] No First Rate ships, those that carried more than 400 men, were included in the fleet, however. The Second Rate *Swiftsure* and *Paragon* carried a complement of 350 and 300 seamen respectively. There were four Third Rate ships (*Gloucester*, *Lion*, *Marston Moor* and *Torrington*) which carried between 230–280 crew each, four Fourth Rate ships (*Discovery*, *Dover*, *Laurel* and

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[16] Brian Lavery, *The Ship of the Line*, Vol. 1 (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1983), pp.158–160.

[17] Lavery, *The Ship of the Line*, Vol. 1, pp.158–160.

[18] Lavery, *The Ship of the Line*, Vol. 1, pp.158–160; Oppenheim, 'Commonwealth Navy', pp.46–49; Charles Spencer Perceval, 'On a List of the Royal Navy in 1660', *Archaeologia, or, Miscellaneous tracts relating to antiquity*, Vol. 48 (1884), pp.167–184.

Portland) with between 70–160 crew, three Fifth Rate ships (*Grantham*, *Pelican* and *Selby*) with between 50–100 crew and a single Sixth Rate ship (the *Martin* galley) which carried 60 seamen.[19]

Of the remaining 24 ships only one (the *Falcon* fire ship) cannot be positively identified as being a prize ship, captured between 1650 and 1654. Most were Dutch but one was Portuguese – the *Convertine*, previously known as the *Nossa Senhora da Natividade* – whilst two had been captured from the Royalist fleet, the *Marigold* that was called the *Crowned Lion* by the Royalists and the *Gilliflower* previously called the *Saint Michael*. Little detail is known about these captured vessels but the *Convertine* and the *Matthias* (formerly the *Sint Mattheus*) were the largest, both having a gross tonnage of 666 tons. The *Indian*, taken as a prize only in 1654, was a Dutch East Indiaman, formerly known to its Dutch owners as the *Roos van Amsterdam*. All of these prize ships were armed. Both the *Indian* and the *Matthias* carried 44 guns whilst the Fifth Rate ships *Cardiff* (formerly the *Fortun*) and *Tulip* (previous name unknown) carried only 18 each.[20]

The vessels of Penn's fleet were commanded by regular naval officers and merchant captains who had taken advantage in the massive increase in the size of the navy and its desperate need for experienced commanders to take commissions, with Vice Admiral Goodsonn being the most obvious example. The ordinary seamen were an assortment of volunteers, pressed men and soldiers drafted from the army.[21] Each vessel carried a complement of drafted soldiers, who were responsible for manning the guns as well as performing routine duties on and below deck. It seems that these soldiers were not forced to go aloft, however. In most cases the ratio of landsmen to seamen on fighting vessels did not exceed one in four but on board the prizes and merchant vessels the ratio was considerably higher.

None of the extant narratives of the war that concern the navy make any significant reference to the poor quality of the naval personnel (unlike the army), so it might be assumed that, after almost two years of constant warfare, the seamen who crewed Penn's fleet were for the most part experienced and competent. It is believed that many of the captains who commanded the expanded navy at this time had previously been captains of merchantmen or even privateers, and so as such, whilst perhaps not experienced in naval warfare, would have been well-versed in the command of a ship and men at sea. Again there are no references that are critical of the individual competencies of the naval officers.

Initially it was planned that the fleet would only consist of 14 warships when, on 5 June, the Council of State ordered the Admiralty Commissioners to prepare and provision them for 'the Western design'.[22] However, a month later when the composition of Penn's fleet was agreed at a Council of State meeting on 3 July 1654, at which Cromwell himself seems to have been present, the number had increased to 38. Interestingly these decisions were made some weeks before the stormy meeting of the Council on 20 July when it seems the destination of the expedition had finally been agreed upon. The nominal division of Penn's fleet was into three squadrons which were comprised of the following State vessels:[23]

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[19] Lavery, *The Ship of the Line*, Vol. 1, pp.158–160; Oppenheim, 'Commonwealth Navy', pp.46–49; Charles Spencer Perceval, 'On a List of the Royal Navy in 1660', *Archaeologia, or, Miscellaneous tracts relating to antiquity*, Vol. 48 (1884), pp.167–184.

[20] Rif Winfield, *British Warships in the Age of Sail, 1603–1714: design, construction, careers and fates* (Barnsley: Seaforth, 2009), pp.95–107.

[21] Hammond, 'English Navy', pp.159–178.

[22] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.201.

The Squadron of Admiral Penn

Rate	Vessel	Seamen	Soldiers	Guns	Captains
2	*Swiftsure*	350	30	60	Jonas Poole
3	*Marston Moor*	280	30	54	Edward Blagg
3	*Matthias*	200	30	44	John White
4	*Laurel*	160	30	40	William Crispin
5	*Selby*	100	10	24	John Clarke
4	*Great Charity*	150	0	36	Leonard Harris
4	*Discovery*	70	160	30	Thomas Wilts
5	*Half Moon*	60	140	28	Bartholomew Ketcher
5	*Rose-bush*	60	150	28	Richard Hodges
5	*Sampson*	50	150	20	John Hubbard
5	*Golden Cock*	60	150	24	William Garrat
5	*Arms of Holland*	55	150	20	Robert Storey
5	*Hound*	45	?	?	?

The Squadron of Vice Admiral Goodsonn

Rate	Vessel	Seamen	Soldiers	Guns	Captains
2	*Paragon*	300	30	54	William Goodsonn
2	*Lion*	230	30	44	John Lambert
4	*Bear*	150	30	36	Francis Kirby
4	*Dover*	160	30	40	Robert Saunders
5	*Grantham*	100	10	24	John Lightfoot
4	*Heat's Ease*	70	160	30	Thomas Wright
5	*Adam and Eve*	50	110	20	William Coppin
5	*Cardiff*	50	150	18	John Grove
5	*Pelican* prize	50	150	18	Anthony Archer
5	*Little Charity*	60	0	20	Robert Key Tubb
5	*Marigold*	60	38 horses	20	Humphrey Felstead
5	*Falmouth*	45	?	?	Robert Mills

The Squadron of Rear Admiral Dakins

Rate	Vessel	Seamen	Soldiers	Guns	Captains
3	*Torrington*	280	30	54	George Dakins
4	*Portland*	160	30	40	Newberry
3	*Indian*	220	30	44	Terry
3	*Gloucester*	280	30	54	Ben. Blake
6	*Martin* galley	60	0	12	William Vessey
4	*Convertine*	75	200	30	John Heyward

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[23] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, pp.241, xl; Penn, *Memorials*, pp.17–18, 57; TNA, SP25/75, f.413.

Rate	Vessel	Seamen	Soldiers	Guns	Captains
4	*Katherine*	70	200	30	Willoughby Hanman
5	*Gilliflower*	55	130	24	Henry Fenn
5	*Falcon* fly-boat	50	130	24	Thomas Fleet
5	*Tulip*	50	150	18	Jeffrey Dare
5	*Falcon* fire ship	35	100	12	William Tickell
5	*Westergate*	50	150	20	Samuel Hawks
5	*Crow*	60	water	20	Thomas Thompson
Total (all three squadrons)		4,410	2,910	1,114	

In addition to the naval vessels there were also additional supply ships designated to support the fleet. These were merchant vessels chartered by the navy for the voyage out at rates based on the tonnage they carried and the eventual destination. Little is known of the identity of these vessels but certainly not all sailed at the same time as Penn departed. The *Recovery, William, Edward, Augustine* and *Morning Star* were chartered by the navy commissioners, were loaded in the Thames and were ready to sail by 27 December; however they were awaiting wind to set them on their way and were considerably delayed, only arriving in Barbados after Penn had sailed for Hispaniola.[24] Also involved to transport supplies were the *Marmaduke, Hopewell, Loyaltie* and *Wellbound*.[25]

On 3 February 1655 the London merchant John Paige wrote to an associate on the Canary Islands that 10 merchantmen were 'laden with provisions' which were to be dispatched to support Penn, along with '5 men-of-war which go as convoys'. A month later he added that there 'are now 6 ships freighted to carry soldiers, ammunition and provisions to Gen. Penn's fleet'. In April he wrote that the charges paid by the government for freighting cargoes of supplies were 50 shillings per ton to Barbados, to San Domingo 4*l* and to the Bay of Mexico 6*l* per ton.[26] At least one vessel, but possibly more, was charted in Barbados to help transport the army to Hispaniola and Jamaica. The *Goodfellow* was a New England vessel so chartered, and which ran aground departing Cagway harbour in Jamaica on 25 June 1655.[27]

Needless to say each ship was required to carry a significant amount of supplies and equipment. In August 1654 the organising committee provided a very detailed list of what they deemed each vessel ought to carry on the expedition. In addition to this they were required to carry all the equipment provided and described in the previous chapter plus the soldiers and sufficient food and water for over 4,400 seamen, 3,000 soldiers and over 100 horses for at least one month. The procurement and stowage of such vast quantities was quite a complex logistical challenge in itself.

It was not an easy task for the officers responsible for the loading of the fleet to keep a track of which vessels had even been loaded, where they were or when they would be ready to sail. Francis Willoughby, the navy commissioner stationed in Portsmouth with responsibility to oversee the preparations of the fleet, had seen no records of anything being loaded on board the *Adam and Eve*, when on 13 December he wrote to the navy commissioners enquiring if any supplies had yet been dispatched for loading.[28] The *Crow* was laden at Gravesend by the 12 December but was wanting an anchor and still needed additional crew before she could depart. This shortage had presumably been made up when it was reported on 15 December that the *Crow* had departed Gravesend to join Penn.[29] However she was then forced back to Woolwich due to bad weather with her cargo of 1,443 gallons of brandy, raisins, flour and oatmeal.[30] On Hispaniola Venables was to later lament the lack of brandy available to his men. It was reported on 4 December 1654 that the *William* had laden on board 1,000 snaphaunce muskets, 261 matchlock muskets, 250 carbines and 250 'Draggoonres', as well as 150 pistols with holsters. The *William* only arrived in Barbados after the fleet had departed, so these weapons, though useful, were never received until after Jamaica had been captured.[31]

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[24] TNA, SP18/91, f. Letter 138; Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.499.

[25] Winfield, *British warships*, pp.270, 272, 93, 263; TNA, SP18/91, f. Letter 138.; Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.499; TNA, WO47/3.

[26] George F. Steckley (ed.), *The Letters of John Paige, London merchant, 1648–1658*, Vol. 21 (London: London Record Society Publications, 1984).

[27] Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal', p.20.

The fleet lost two of its vessels during the first year of the expedition. On Friday 25 May the *Discovery* was at anchor in Cagway harbour in Jamaica when a fire broke out:

> occaisioned ('tis said) by drawing off brandy in or near the steward's room. The liquor took flame, and gained so on, that, notwithstanding many boats, all hands, and buckets, were employed, the smoke was so thick all over the hold, [that] their helps did little more than perhaps a little retard the violence of the fire; which, about an hour after its beginning, broke out at the ports, and gained above decks abaft. It instantly thence run and grew all in a flame to the mainmast, and so proceeded burning forward on till midnight; when, burning down to the powder-room under the forecastle, she blew up with a very terrible blow, having in her 120 barrels of powder; but God, in His goodness, carried the violence of that to landward, where pieces of timber, cordage, and one bow-anchor, were carried; and, by the burning timbers, the wood was set on fire, and continued burning the next day. We [the *Swiftsure*] were the nighest ship to her, and not in & little fear of her driving on board us; but, through mercy, she drove to the eastward of us. In her, all was lost; and this very day were put on board her most of this ship's [*Swiftsure's*] provisions of beef, pork, peas, oatmeal, flour, rice, &c. and twenty-four of our best guns; twenty of them demy cannon, and four whole calverins, even all our lower tier. *O pavor! O fortitudo!*[32]

In a letter to Cromwell dated 6 June Penn noted that he hoped to 'recover again speedily all the guns, having found out the hull of the ship and already gotten up six of them.'[33] The cannon were recovered by 'art and industry'[34] and by the extraordinary 'Labour & danger of those w[hi]ch attended that Service'.[35] As a reward for their efforts these nameless salvagers were given 80 *l*.[36] It is not recorded how many of the crew perished when the ship was lost but certainly some did survive. On 15 June two survivors, Martyn Symon and Henry H(?) 'Clerk of ye Cheque, & Chirurgeon Mate of the late Ship Discovery' were given passage on the *Convertine* back to England.[37]

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[28] TNA, SP18/91, f. Letter 73.

[29] TNA, SP18/91, ff. Letter 68, 77.

[30] TNA, SP18/103, f. Letter 15.

[31] TNA, SP18/91, f. Letter 20.

[32] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.108–109.

Penn, on his return voyage to England, also lost the *Paragon*, George Dakins' flag off Cuba. On 13 July:

> Being a day appointed for seeking the Lord, the Paragon, between nine and 10 o'clock, in sermon-time, took fire in the steward's room; and burnt three or four hours, till at last she blew up. Her masts were burnt down within an hour after the beginning of the fire. About 110 men were lost in the water; the rest were saved by their own and other ships' boats.[38]

Another witness wrote that, 'The rear admiral Dakins, and some others, with much danger and difficulty, escaped, divers ships boats, which were nearest, coming in to their assistance, notwithstanding there perished about one hundred and forty men.'[39] Around 20 of the wounded were taken on board the *Rosebush* and were treated by the ship's surgeon Peter Noxon who, in 1657, petitioned the Lord Protector for compensation for the medicines he had provided.[40]

Incidentally the *Westergate* was also lost with all hands in 1664 when it sailed from Port Royal and into a tropical storm.[41]

In late August 1654 Penn's fleet, previously stationed in the Downs, began to assemble in and around the naval dockyard at Portsmouth. At the same time Venables, Heane, Fortescue and Buller were all in Portsmouth to oversee the initial preparations of the loading of the army.[42] By now it was no secret that a large and formidable fleet was being assembled, though its intentions were unknown. The newspapers of the day fuelled the rumours as to how it was to be employed as they kept their readers informed of the activity within the port. On 24 August the *Faithful Scout* reported, 'The two English Fleets, and the forces listing, consisting of 30000 men, are now almost ready to advance',[43] whilst on 16 September it reported that 'Gen. Blake has weigh'd anchor … Gen. Pen [*sic*] is suddenly to follow; so that with the blessing of

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[33] Penn, *Memorials*, p.112.

[34] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.388.

[35] NMM, WYN/18, Letterbook, 26 Jul 1654–4 Sep 1655, includes list of ships in squadron, f.88.

[36] NMM, WYN/18, Letterbook, 26 Jul 1654–4 Sep 1655, includes list of ships in squadron, f.88.

[37] NMM, WYN/18, Letterbook, 26 Jul 1654–4 Sep 1655, includes list of ships in squadron, f.75.

[38] Penn, *Memorials*, p.126.

[39] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.389.

[40] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1656–7*, p.108.

[41] David J. Hepper, *British Warship Losses in the Age of Sail, 1650–1859* (Rotherfield: Jean Boudroit Publications, 1994), p.3.

[42] TT, *Certain Passages, 1 September–8 September 1654*, 40:E.233[23]; TT, *Certain Passages, 24 August–1 September 1654*, 40:E.233[18].

[43] TT, *The Faithful Scout, 18–25 August 1654*, 40:E.233[12].

God, by a prudent Parliament, a powerful Army, and terrible Navy, under the command of his Highness, great things may be effected for the good of this Nation. Never more need.'[44] It was noted that the *Paragon* had been ordered to join Penn in Portsmouth on 2 September to bolster the fleet.[45] On 23 September it was reported in *A Perfect Account* that:

> Some frigats that were in these parts [that is, the Downs Station] belonging to the fleet are gone away Westward to joyn with those commanded by Gen. Pen, which are yet about Portsmouth; and we hear the whole fleet is suddenly to hoyst sale for their intended expedition, and I hope all good people may be stirred up in prayer to seek the Lord for a blessing upon their undertakings, the desired success therein rending much to the glory of God, and the peace and honour of all Christendome.[46]

On 7 October *Certain Passages* wrote, 'Gen Pen [*sic*] is now everyday in great expectation when he shall receive his instructions to weigh anchor, and launch forth amongst the curles waves: his fleet are excellently equipped of all kinds of necessaries and provision for war.'[47] By November it was becoming evident that the fleet was in its final stages of preparation when it was reported that Penn was called to London, in the middle of the month, to receive his final instructions from Cromwell, however he was back in Portsmouth by 23 November, accompanied by his wife, to oversee the final preparations and the boarding of the army.[48]

With such a large concentration of officers and sailors it is perhaps not surprising that some took the opportunity to air their grievances regarding their service with the navy in the form of a curious incident that occurred in Portsmouth. In early October certain unnamed seamen submitted a petition to their officers listing the grievances that they had regarding the terms of their employment in the navy, and which they hoped would be forwarded to the Lord Protector for his consideration. They claimed that many of them 'have served the Commonwealth of *England* in the Parliaments service for divers years' and that they have 'been very free in hazarding themselves both at Sea and Land, and have suffered great hardship ... besides great diseases and distempers, sometimes occassioned through bad Victual'. The Petitioners went on state that it was Parliament's declared intention 'to maintain and enlarge the Liberties of the free-people of *England* where infringed: which we were in great hopes of'. They argued that their own liberties were being infringed by being 'imprested, and haled on board the Commonwealths Ships, turned over and confined there, under a degree of thraldome and bondage, to the utter ruine of your Petitioners poor families. That pay appointed them being also detained, sometimes 10, 12, 16, and 20 months from them.' They concluded by stating that since the beginning of the Dutch

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[44] TT, *The Faithful Scout, 8 September–15 September 1654*, 40:E.233[31].

[45] TT, *Certain Passages, 4 August–11 August 1654*, 40:E.233[1].

[46] TT, *A Perfect Account, 20 September–27 September 1654*, 123:E.812[15].

[47] TT, *Certain Passages, 5 October–12 October 1654*, 40:E.235[13].

[48] TT, *Certain Passages, 17 November–24 November 1654*, 40:E.236[24].

War many of them had been sent abroad for service and, in a direct reference to the upcoming expedition, they claimed 'some numbers more of us are designed abroad, as we hear … and so our Relations will be left in a perishing condition, as divers of those are, that spent themselves in the late Wars'. In consideration of these grievances they were petitioning Cromwell so that:

> they may be relieved in those grievances and may reap some fruits of all their bloodshed and hardships, and that they may not be imprested to serve, they humbly apprehending it to be inconsistent with the principles of Freedom and Liberty to force men to serve in military employments, either by sea or land; and that your petitioners may be as free as the Dutch seamen, against whom they have been such instruments in the Lord's hands for the good of their country; but that if the Commonwealth have occasion to employ any of your petitioners they may be hired as the Dutch are, and that they, or their lawful attorney, may be paid every six months at the furthest, and that such other encouragement to their relations may be assured in case they are slain in the service as shall be agreeable to justice, etc., as their necessity calls for, and that all other liberties and privileges due to your petitioners as freemen of England may be granted and secured.[49]

The merits of this petition were considered by a Council of War held abroad the *Swiftsure* on 17 October. Present were Vice Admiral John Lawson, Rear Admiral George Dakins (both could be described as agitators) and many of the captains who were to serve with Penn in the West Indies. Surprisingly the officers agreed that the petitioners had good grounds for these grievances and so they 'resolved in the affirmative, generally to own it, and likewise voted, that it should be sent to the Protector, with a Letter to his *Highness* concerning the Officers subscriptions to the generals'.[50] This petition, though it certainly gained publicity, seems not to have led to any redress of the grievances held by the seamen. It was not, in any way, intended to be mutinous but could well have been deemed so in another era. Doubtless those involved were soon so caught up in the rush to get the fleets to sea that it was quietly forgotten about.

By the end of November all the senior commanders of the expedition were in Portsmouth, including Desborough who personally supervised the provisioning of the fleet. Once the army started to concentrate in the area in the first few weeks of December it was embarked as quickly as possible. By 20 December some of the vessels were loaded and ready to depart, including the regiments of Heane, Buller and Carter. It was decided that those vessels already loaded would sail for Barbados immediately rather than wait for the others to complete their final preparations. And so on Wednesday 20 December this advance element of the expedition slipped anchor and sailed out of the dockyards at Portsmouth. Under the command of Rear Admiral George Dakins this impromptu squadron consisted of the *Torrington*,

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[49] TT, *To his Highness the Lord Protector the humble petition of the sea-men, belonging to the ships of the Commonwealth of England*, 1654, 246:669.f.19[33].

[50] TT, *The Faithful Scout, 3 November–10 November 1654*, 40:E.236[16].

Marston Moor, *Laurel*, *Convertine*, *Discovery*, *Arms of Holland*, *Heart's Ease*, *Cardiff*, *Katherine*, *Tulip*, *Westergate*, *Gilliflower*, the *Falcon* fly-boat and *Falcon* fire ship.[51]

On 25 December 1654 William Penn issued a set of *Sailing Instructions*[52] to his fleet. In these he firstly advised his captains that the destination of the fleet was to be 'the Island of Barbadoes, in America'. If any of the ships became separated en route they were to 'make for the said Island of Barbadoes with all the speed that possibly you may; not touching at any place by the way'. He advised that his captains were 'authorised to take, seize, and surprise, or otherwise to sink, burn or destroy, all Turkish ships or vessels, with their lading … and also all Spanish ships, vessels, or goods, &c. on the other side of the tropic; and all ships, vessels, or goods belonging to the French king, or any of his subjects'. They were to ensure that nothing on board any of these ships was 'embezzled' but were required to 'seal up the hatches' and on arrival in Barbados where they were 'to follow such orders as you shall receive' concerning the prize.[53]

The *Instructions* then continued with what in modern times would be called Standing Orders. These included practical communication procedures such as, 'as soon as we [the *Swiftsure*] loose our fore-top sail and fire a gun, being at anchor, every ship to make ready and weigh'. Also, 'if we come by the lee and make a west with our jack, every ship is to come and speak with us'. If it 'prove thick with foggy weather, you are desired to keep within hearing and report of muskets, beat of drum, and sound of trumpets, which you must answer with the like'. They were further instructed that if a ship became separated but then met the fleet at night one vessel would need to hail the other by asking 'What ship is that?' to which the other vessel needed to reply 'Commonwealth' and as a confirmation that the first ship recognised the second it need to reply 'Flourish'. Furthermore if land, or any danger, was spotted at night then 'he that first seeth it … is to fire a piece of ordnance, and shew as many lights as he can. Penn concluded 'If any one have an extraordinary occasion to speak with me, the sign is to lower his top-sails and fire a gun.'[54]

After the arrival of the fleet in Barbados it was decided that 'for ye more vigorous procescution [*sic*] of ye intended Service in America yt a Regimt of Seamen' be raised and which consisted of 'rugged sailors, whose manners argued them better fed, than either instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, or rudiments of martial discipline.'[55] It was not unusual for seamen to be employed on land, as they had been at the siege of Lyme Regis in 1644[56] when seamen had been employed to repulse the attacking Royalists. Seaman also supported local Parliamentarian forces in South

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[51] Penn, *Memorials*, p.56.

[52] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.58–60.

[53] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.58–60.

[54] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.58–60.

[55] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.379.

[56] Roberts, *The History of Lyme-Regis, Dorset, from the Earliest Periods to the Present Day*, p.54; J.R. Powell and E.K. Timings (eds), *Documents relating to the Civil War, 1642–1648*, Vol. 105 (London: The Navy Records Society, 1963), p.143.

Wales in 1645 and played a role at the siege of Haverfordwest Castle.[57] Given the already large army that had been recruited by the time the expedition left Barbados, and the already obvious shortage of equipment, it would seem that the raising of another regiment was unnecessary. Perhaps an explanation for this might be that by the time the fleet arrived in Barbados there was already a rift between Penn and Venables, and by extension between the fleet and the army, and so Penn deemed it prudent to form his own regiment for service on land to protect the interests of the fleet, if they were beginning to believe that perhaps the army and Venables himself could not be trusted upon. Perhaps an ulterior motive was a desire of the fleet to have its representatives present with the army so that when it came to sharing the expected spoils they would be able to claim their part on the spot, without losing it to the army.

Whatever the reason for its formation it was only to increase the friction between the two services, not least because it was the Sea Regiment that saved the army from total rout on two separate occasions. This distrust came to a head early in May 1655 when the army was being re-embarked after the Hispaniola fiasco. A near mutiny occurred within the ranks of the army when it was decided to embark the Sea Regiment first. The army refused this as it was widely thought that the fleet would sail away and leave the army stranded once the seamen were aboard.

William Penn commissioned Vice admiral William Goodsonn as colonel of the new regiment on 19 March, 1655, which meant that Venables, as commander of the army, had no direct authority over one of his regiments. Most of the regiment's officers were captains from ships of the fleet, and these were:

Colonel William Goodson: his captain was Tho. Blackman.
Lt. Col. Ben. Blake: captain of the *Gloucester*
Major Edw. Blagg: captain of the *Marston Moor*
Capts. Francis Kirby: captain of the *Bear*
Humphrey Fletcher: captain of the *Marigold*?
Barth. Ketcher: captain of the *Half Moon*
Robt. Mill: captain of the *Falmouth*
Wm. Tickell: captain of the *Falcon* fire ship
David Katts
John Molan[58]

On 12 April Penn appointed a certain Mr. Clarke, 'assistant to the Chirurigion Generall', to the position of surgeon to the Sea Regiment. In this respect he was to take with him two assistants, and also to take 'Medicaments for prsent use out of the Chirurgeons Store on bord ye Paragon'.[59] The strength of this regiment is unknown, but was probably between 1,000–1,200 men, although one commentator stated its strength at 1,080 men 'all gallantly armed' but 'indifferently well exercised.'[60] Casualties received on Hispaniola are reckoned to be low, though David Catts (or Katts) was killed in the first engagement with the Spanish, whilst a corporal, Jonathan Webbe, was also killed.[61] Overall the regiment proved itself to be solid under fire, mainly because of the *esprit de corps* that existed before the regiment was formed and greater discipline that been impressed upon them from the start, unlike the army.

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[57] Michael James Lea-O'Mahoney, 'The Navy in the English Civil War' (PhD Thesis, University of Exeter, 2011), p.194; Powell and Timings (eds), *Documents relating to the Civil War*, p.209.

[58] NMM, WYN/18, Letterbook, 26 Jul 1654–4 Sep 1655, includes list of ships in squadron; Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.158; Penn, *Memorials*, pp.74–75.

[59] NMM, WYN/18, Letterbook, 26 Jul 1654–4 Sep 1655, includes list of ships in squadron, f.53.

By Christmas 1654 all the frantic preparations, both in Portsmouth and along the River Thames at London, were complete. Admiral William Penn, with his formidable fleet, was ready to leave England's shore and head off into the unknown.

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[60] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.158.

[61] NMM, WYN/18, Letterbook, 26 Jul 1654–4 Sep 1655, includes list of ships in squadron; NMM, WYN/10, Journals, relating to service in the West Indies 2 Mar 1654–14 Sep 1655, by William Fowler, Richard Rooth and William Burrows.

5

The Expedition Departs

Throughout the summer of 1654 rumours circulated in the English press that the Lord Protector was about to undertake a grand design for the benefit of England and the glory of God. It is probably no coincidence that these rumours spread as Cromwell was playing a game of diplomatic hide and seek with France and Spain, as both wooed his support. As early as April 1654, just as the peace with the Dutch was being signed, it was being reported that William Penn would be leading out a fleet on 'the Expedition which Christendom so much looks upon'.[1] Quite what the objective of this expedition was to be became a matter of continued speculation throughout the year, not just within the English press but in diplomatic circles as well.

At the end of April *The Faithful Scout* suggested that the attack might be on Leghorn (modern day Livorno, Italy) to assist English trade there or perhaps 'the high Determinations of the Council so shall order it, as they shall call the Turks to an account at Tunis or Alger for the injuries they have done unto the Christians'.[2] In early August 1654, around the time the Council of State had made its decision to attack the Spanish in the West Indies, the rumours began to intensify. As preparations began to make ready the fleets of Blake and Penn in Portsmouth the newspapers were reporting that the two fleets were being prepared for some unknown purpose.[3] By 22 August it was reported that 'Great things are expected from the Squadrons of your *English* Navy, that are going forth with Generall *Blake* and Generall *Penn*. It is said the latter hath many land souldiers to goe along with him.'[4] On 24 August *The Faithful Scout* reported that a force of 30,000 had assembled and which were 'almost ready to advance: their design is honourable in behalf of the Protestants; so that the Pope now begins to tremble, and his Bull for to roar.'[5] Whilst on 16 September the

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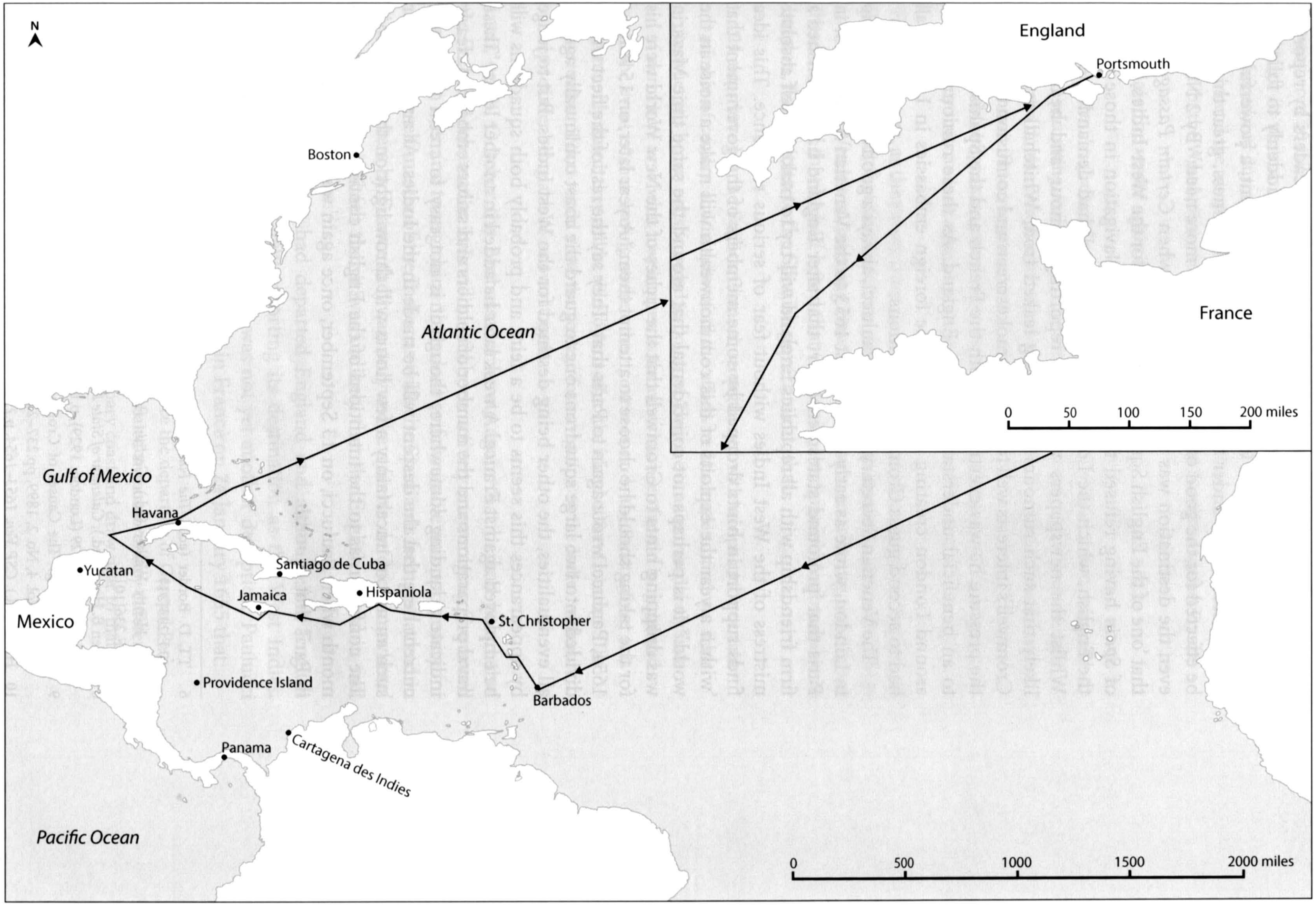
[1] TT, D. Border (ed.), *The Faithful Scout, 28 April–5 May 1654*, no.177, London, 39:E.227[34].

[2] TT, *The Faithful Scout, 28 April–5 May 1654*, 39:E.227[34].

[3] TT, Henry Walker (ed.), *Certain Passages, 4 August–11 August 1654*, no. 30, London, 40:E.233[1], p.233; TT, D. Border (ed.), *The Faithful Scout, 4 August–11 August 1654*, no. 191, London, 40:E.230[36].

[4] TT, John Hall (ed.), *Mercurius Politicus, 31 August–7 September 1654*, no. 220, London, 123:E.809[12].

[5] TT, D. Border (ed.), *The Faithful Scout, 18–25 August 1654*, no. 193, London, 40:E.233[12].


N
England
Portsmouth
France
0
50
100
150
200 miles
Boston
Atlantic Ocean
Gulf of Mexico
Havana
Yucatan
Santiago de Cuba
Hispaniola
Jamaica
Mexico
St. Christopher
Providence Island
Barbados
Panama
Cartagena des Indies
Pacific Ocean
0
500
1000
1500
2000 miles

Map 2 The Route of the English fleet, 1654–1655.

same newsletter fuelled the rising expectation of its readers by reporting 'Gen. Blake has weigh'd anchor … Gen. Pen [*sic*] is suddenly to follow; so that with the blessing of God, by a prudent Parliament, a powerful Army, and terrible Navy, under the command of his Highness, great things may be effected for the good of this Nation. Never more need.'[6] By 2 November even the destination was reported correctly when *Certain Passages* noted that 'one of the English Squadrons is designed for the West-Indies, the King of *Spain* having refused the free Trade and Navigation in those parts to the English, which the Lord Protector Cromwell had demanded of him'.[7] Whilst the newspapers were only reporting rumour and hearsay it is likely that such rumours were being leaked from Whitehall as it served Cromwell's interests well to create a smokescreen and confusion to intensify the pressure he was exerting on both the French and the Spanish to come to an beneficial understanding with England. As these rumours swirled around London creating confusion the foreign embassies in London all had to second guess Cromwell's intentions.

The Venetian Secretary, Lorenzo Paulucci, always a good source of gossip in London, wrote as early as 3 August 1653 to the Venetian Ambassador in Paris that 'profound statesmen assert that after England has established a firm friendship with all republics England will try to make herself absolute mistress of the West Indies without fear of serious resistance. This idea finds support in hints dropped by some members of the government that 'within a year the exploits of this commonwealth will make a noise in the world.'[8] It is perhaps not coincidental that around the same time Mazarin was dropping hints to Cromwell that the riches of the New World were his for the taking should he choose to attempt them.[9] A year later, on 15 August 1654, Paulucci wrote again to Paris that 'They say the rest of the fleet will be divided into two large squadrons one to guard the coast continually against all eventualities, the other being destined for the West Indies. But to judge by appearances this seems to be a feint and probably both squadrons will be employed against France.' A week later he added in another letter, 'These naval preparations and the number of soldiers and sailors embarked clearly indicate a landing somewhere, though it is not easy to credit the report current here that the descent will be made in the Indies. At any rate, after such an age of uncertainty a few hours will throw light on the question.'[10] The confusion as to the intentions of the English continued the following month when Paulucci, on 13 September, once again wrote to his colleague in Paris that:

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[6] TT, D. Border (ed.), *The Faithful Scout, 8 September–15 September 1654*, no. 196, London, 40:E.233[31]

[7] TT, Henry Walker (ed.), *Certain Passages, 27 October-3 November 1654*, no. 39, London, 40:E.236[10].

[8] Allen B. Hinds (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers Relating To English Affairs in the Archives of Venice, 1653–1654*, Vol. 29 (London: 1929), p.108.

[9] Frank Strong, 'The Causes of Cromwell's West Indian Expedition', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1899, pp.237–238.

[10] Hinds (ed.), *CSP Ven. 1653–1654*, p.251.

> another of 50 sail is now being fitted out under the command of General Penn, though its destination is a secret. The report that it has cavalry on board is confirmed and during these last days a careful choice has been made of officers to command the troops to be embarked on this expedition. Some still think it is meant for the West Indies while others believe it means hostilities against France.

A week later he wrote again to Paris that:

> General Penn's squadron has been ordered to assemble off Portsmouth, wind and weather permitting, and will sail from thence. It is still stated that these 50 ships will carry a double complement of hands, as required in the West Indies, though as it is known that arrangements have been made for receiving cavalry on board a reasonable impression prevails that this squadron may be meant for Holland, as here they show an increasing disposition to support that Province.[11]

These rumours, as they were intended, were reaching the capitals of Spain and France. On 3 October the Venetian Ambassador in Spain wrote to the Doge and Senate in Venice concerning how these rumours were being considered there. He noted that he had heard that Cardenas, the Spanish Ambassador in London, had written to the Spanish government, that:

> 24 ships have left the English Channel, strengthened with troops and a certain number of cavalry, and in spite of all the efforts he has made to find out their instructions he has not succeeded in doing so. They are in an extraordinary state of alarm here as to what may happen as the news has been far too long delayed in the event of their having steered their course towards the Strait where, it is commonly stated, they will be able to turn off to the island of San Domingo. The possession of that would close the passage for navigation to the Indies, without hope of ever being able to recover it again.

Later, on 20 October the Ambassador wrote again that he had heard that the French Ambassador in London had been actively encouraging Cromwell 'more than ever and to urge him not to lose so favourable an opportunity for making himself master of the Indies as with the Spaniards being attacked in so many quarters by France they can only make a feeble defence anywhere.' Despite this, he still felt that it was unlikely that the English would in fact attack the West Indies.[12]

Even after the fleet had departed England and although the English newspapers were accurately reporting its destination as the West Indies, some were still not convinced this was not yet another deception. Paulucci was to again write to the Ambassador in France on 24 January 1655 that:

> Nothing certain is heard about the fleet and since the departure of General Pen's fine squadron the talk about its purpose has revealed an extraordinary difference of opinion. They still say it may go to the Barbary coast and draw near to that of

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[11] Hinds (ed.), *CSP Ven. 1653–1654*, p.260.

[12] Hinds (ed.), *CSP Ven. 1653–1654*, p.270.

> General Blach [Blake]. Others assert it will sail to the Cape of Good Hope and take possession of some important position adapted for the passage of all ships going to or coming from the East Indies. Others that it will go to take some large island in the West Indies, while others again believe that all the efforts will be turned against France. With so much diversity I cannot assert anything, but must wait for time to disclose the truth.[13]

However, by February it was pretty clear to all interested parties that that destination was the West Indies. The Venetian Ambassador in Spain reported to Venice on 27 February that he had been informed that Cardenas had ascertained the destination pretty quickly for he 'immediately sent a speedy frigate to San Sebastian [a port on the north coast of Spain, in the Bay of Biscay] with dispatches directed to the king. In these he announces that the intentions of the Protector Cromwell are to send it to the West Indies as may readily be inferred from the provisions and abundant stores.' This message must have arrived in Madrid around the first or second week of January 1655. In London, Paulucci was finally convinced the destination was the West Indies by early February when he once again wrote to the Ambassador in France that:

> With regard to that [fleet] of General Pen I find that it is destined for the West Indies to capture some island or important passage. The arrangement has been made thanks to the information of a Dominican friar [Thomas Gage] who has been in those parts and knows them well, who has had many secret conferences with the Protector on the subject.[14]

During this torrent of rumour Penn's fleet completed its preparations and made ready to sail from England. With the army having only been formed in late November there was inevitably much confusion and a lot of haste needed to concentrate it around Portsmouth for embarkation. Finally with something tangible to tell their readers, the English newspapers were able to keep the reading populace updated on the arrangements. The different elements of the army were ordered to mobilise and concentrate at Portsmouth in early December. On 23 November *Certain Passages* was advising its readers that the soldiers previously 'drawn forth, are marching towards the Sea coast, which makes men believe that the Fleet now about *Portsmouth* wil suddenly put forth to Sea.'[15] Whilst *The Faithful Scout* was to state on 14 December that 'most of the Officers and Soldiers employed in the present Expedition, are come to the general rendezvous, in order to their taking of shipping', whilst on 16 December it reported that 'Gen. *Venables*, with all the rest of his Officers and Souldiers, employed in the present Expedition, are at

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[13] Hinds (ed.), *CSP Ven. 1655–1656*, Vol. 30, p.12.

[14] Hinds (ed.), *CSP Ven. 1655–1656*, p.18.

[15] TT, Henry Walker (ed.), *Certain Passages, 17 November–24 November 1654*, London, 40:E.236[24].

Portsmouth, and will suddenly be under sayl.'[16] In reality the situation was chaotic. Regiments were arriving in Portsmouth piecemeal, often without their officers. Desborough was to write that on 2 December elements of Heane's own regiment were already at Farnham 'but no captains with them; and also that they say, they doe not expect their captains this five or six dayes.'[17] On 7 December Heane and Buller's regiments only had arrived in Portsmouth and 'very few officers with them'. The previous day Buller's had been mustered and reviewed in Chichester. A frustrated Desborough wrote he would muster all regiments similarly 'when I understand where they are'.[18] Captain Jones' troop in London was only instructed on 12 December to ride to Portsmouth for mustering and to receive its pay.[19] Once in the vicinity of Portsmouth each unit was mustered and given a month's pay. Despite this organisational chaos, the army mustering around 2,500 men was finally embarked onto the awaiting fleet of General William Penn around the 20 December.[20]

The Perfect Account was one of the first to confirm the departure in its newspaper printed on 27 December, when it wrote:

> This day sevennight [that is, 20 December] Maj. Gen. Hayns [*sic*] set sayl with his Squadron and Regiment from Portsmouth, and is now conceived to be 500 Leagues off. He put out with much gallantry, and made a speech to his men, reflecting on the Expedition; whereat so great an Echo was returned, that their unanimous expressions, were a sufficient testimoney [*sic*] of their never dying Fame and integrity towards him.
>
> They had no sooner lanched [*sic*] forth amongst the curled Waves, but the day following was a great meeting of the Officers, where were the three Generals, Pen, Desborough, and Venables; as also col. Pride, col Fortescue, and the rest, who took great paines, and used much diligence for hafting the rest away; and orders being given for shipping of the horse, proclamation was made by beat of Drum, for all souldiers speedily to on board, and the Reformadoes are divided 6 in a ship, with one months advance. With these 15 ships that went with Maj: Gen. Haynes [*sic*], the Regiments of Col. Buller, and Col. Carter, were also put aboard; and on Sunday last [that is, 24 December 1654] the rest of the Fleet followed with Gen. Venables, and Gen. Pen [*sic*], having a fair wind: God continue their course with prosporous gales for their Expedition; for they are now designed for the Cuby Islands neer Barbadoes in the West Indies, where the general Randevouz is to be for certain.[21]

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[16] TT, D. Border (ed.), *The Faithful Scout, 8 December-15 December 1654*, no. 203, London, 41:E.237[4]; TT, D. Border (ed.), *The Faithful Scout, 15 December-22 December 1654*, no. 206, London, 41:E.237[9].

[17] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.4.

[18] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.12.

[19] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD 1654*, p.410.

[20] TT, John Hall (ed.), *Mercurius Politicus, 14-21 December 1654*, no. 236, London, 125:E.821[3].

[21] TT, Bernard Alsop (ed.), *A Perfect Account, 27 December 1654-3 January 1655*, no. 208, London, 125:E.821[16].

On Christmas Day 1654, finally, the remainder of the fleet was ready to follow with the army, and all the provided provisions were aboard and a last meeting was held aboard the *Swiftsure* between Penn, Venables, Desborough and other senior officers. Penn issued orders to 'set sail with the fleet directly for the Island of Barbadoes, in America' leaving behind only the *Crow*, which was still in London, and the *Little Charity* that had not completed loading its cargo of horses.[22] Around noon Penn 'commanded a gun to be fiered [*sic*] for all the flete to waie Anchor: and all our seamen to worne them to repaier abord' and the ships gradually slipped out of the safety of Portsmouth Harbour and into the Solent.

As Whistler commented:

> This wose a sad day with our maryed men, they hanging doune thaier heads with a demuer countinance, acting loath to depart, and sume of them profesing more love the one to the other in one halfe our then they had performed in all the time of thayer being together. And many of our yong men that had intangelled them selves in love with sum yong virgin: Whoe think it verie hard and a great cruelltic to leave a yong virgin to whome hee hath ingaidged and whollie devoted his hart: others war weping, and leaving and bequeathing unto them sume pledg of thayer wanton love; receaveing from them sume Cordiall against sea sicknis: as Capes, and Handcerchises, and shertes, to eye and ware when Neptune should most appose them.[23]

The fleet anchored overnight in Stokes Bay, just to the west of Gosport, and the following morning around 11 o'clock it 'bore away with the wind easterly to go through the Needles'. Once past the Needles it encountered 'a fresh gale, the wind veering out southerly with a little rain'.[24] By noon on 27 December the *Swiftsure* passed by Portland Bill 'in a fine gale'. But barely two days out and already the fleet was starting to separate in the rough Channel seas when Penn noted he 'having scen but eleven of them all day'. That night several guns were heard firing but aboard the *Swiftsure* they 'could not see what became of her that fired them'.[25]

On 28 December the fleet passed the Lizard, the most southerly point of England, but by now they had lost the sight of land. Undoubtedly as England slipped from view many of the men on board contemplated what the future would hold for them. Probably most were hopeful of good fortune and pillage, in others the sense of adventure sustained them, whilst perhaps only a few saw it as a religious crusade. But for most of the soldiers in the army this would be their last view of England as most of them would never return to the land of their birth. The following day, and now well to the Atlantic Ocean, two French vessels were spotted and chased but they seem to have escaped unharmed.[26] On 5 January the *Swiftsure* spotted two vessels 'astern of us' which turned out to be the *Grantham* and the *Adventure* dogger-boat. Penn, and presumably Venables, were then informed of the whereabouts of some of the separated ships of the fleet. They were also informed that the *Pelican* was no longer with the fleet as it had sprung a leak off the Lizard and had presumably headed for a port in Ireland after 'taking out all the soldiers'. They could give no indication as to the whereabouts of the *Great Charity* which had not been seen by anybody since 27 December and so they 'concluded it was she that fired those guns that we heard on the 28th in the morning, and do hope she got into Falmouth'.[27] In fact the *Pelican*, whose stern was later described as 'rotten and defective', had sprung a leak and had been forced into Kinsale and was in such a poor condition it was unable to undertake the voyage and was later ordered back to Chatham for repairs.[28] The *Crow* was also found to be defective and never joined Penn and so its cargo of '1,443 gallons of brandy, raisins, flour, and oatmeal' was lost to the expedition.[29]

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[22] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.56–58.

[23] Henry Whistler, 'Extracts from Henry Whistler's Journal of the West India Expedition', *The Narrative of General Venables, with an appendix of papers relating to the expedition to the West Indies and the conquest of Jamaica, 1654–1655* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1900), p.144.

[24] Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal'.

[25] Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal'.

Penn, recognising that the fleet would be slowed down by some 'of the heavy-sailing ships of our company' decided to split up the fleet and to go ahead with 'some of the more nimble ships' and ordered the rest 'follow in company together so fast as they could'.[30] Presumably some of the frigates went ahead of the slower-moving larger warships and heavily laden merchantmen. All the sources that mention the voyage to Barbados agree that it was uneventful. Francis Barrington, writing to Sir John Barrington from Jamaica in June 1655, described one particular event on the voyage to Barbados:

> From the time of our embarking until the time of our arrival in Barbados was six weeks I think to a day, in which we had a most happy passage, not having 12 hours contrary wind, nor in the least a storm ... one eminent mercy was I an eye witness unto in our passage in the preservation of the vessel that I was in, no other being in danger; it was a wind that a rose in a particular place of the sea making the water fly more about than ever I saw a whirlwind to scatter the dust in England; I think it was of the same nature; it followed our vessel some small time at a distance, but coming very nigh unto us (the seamen being most of them affrighted) it made us expect nothing less than to be immediately swallowed up; indeed the danger was exceeding great and very near us, it being not a cable's length from us, and as we every moment expected death, the Lord in mercy looked upon us and relieved us in our sad distress by diverting its course from us without the least of damage to us, indeed I am not able with my pen to express the true manner of our deliverance ... not a ship in the whole voyage received

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[26] Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal'.

[27] Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal', p.4.

[28] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD Int 1654*, p.589; TNA, SP18/91, Admiralty Committee and Navy Commissioners' Papers, 1654, f. Letter 142; Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD 1655* (London: Longmans & Co, 1881), p.110.

[29] TNA, SP18/103, Council of State: Admiralty Committee and Navy Commissioners' Papers, 1655, f. Letter 15.

[30] Penn, *Memorials*, p.71.

> any damage but one through carelessness losing part of her masts, Such a passage former ages cannot parallel, it being so safe, so healthy, and so quick, the number of ships being considered, and the slowness of their sailing, it being often known that more men hath died out of one vessel bound for Barbados than died in our whole squadron.[31]

John Berkenhead, writing to Thurloe shortly after their arrival in Barbados, noted that 'neer men had a better passage' than theirs in which under 20 men were lost.[32]

After departing England the fleet sailed in a southerly direction towards the Canary Islands, which they passed on 10 January. From here they were able to pick up the trade winds which carried the fleet in a south-westerly direction towards the Lesser Antilles and the entrance to the Caribbean. On 12 January the *Grantham* was ordered to escort the small dogger-boat as it was leaking badly, and to provide assistance if required. On Sunday 14 January flying fish and dolphins were seen. At around eight o'clock in the morning of 29 January the island of Barbados was spotted and the fleet safely entered Bridgetown harbour.[33]

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[31] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.571.

[32] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.157.

[33] NMM, WYN/10, Journals, relating to service in the West Indies 2 Mar 1654–14 Sep 1655, by William Fowler, Richard Rooth and William Burrows, Wynne Papers.

6

Barbados

When the English fleet arrived in the Caribbean Sea during the last few days of January 1655 it had entered into a vast and hostile territory, the sea itself was being almost twice the size of Western Europe. The land mass of Central and South America alone was over 11 times the size of the British Isles, France and Spain combined. Despite the size disparity, the English were confident of success in carving out their own empire at the expense of their Catholic soon-to-be foe. They had a large and powerful fleet, an army that dwarfed anything the Spanish could amass in the region and they believed their quest was righteous. Wherever Venables and Penn chose to attack in this expansive region they believed they would be successful.

Spain had claimed possession of all the territories in the New World ever since the Genoese-born Christopher Columbus[1] had become the first modern European to visit them. With the backing of the Catholic Monarchs - the name given to Queen Isabella I of Castile and King Ferdinand II of Aragon, who had married in 1469 and by doing so united most of the Iberian Peninsula and created the nation of Spain - he had attempted to reach the Indies[2] by sailing west across the Atlantic, but instead found the Americas, the land mass that now encompasses North, Central and South America. During his first voyage in 1492 he visited first the Bahamas and then the islands of Cuba and Hispaniola. In a further three voyages he visited most of the Caribbean islands as well as parts of Central America. Even before Columbus returned from his first voyage the Catholic Monarchs, fearing that Portugal might lay claim to any territories discovered, had petitioned the Pope to grant Spain the exclusive right of possession to any lands they discovered to the west of Europe. In May 1493 the Aragon-born Pope Alexander VI issued the Papal Bull *Inter Caetera* which recognised Spain's claim to any lands to be discovered and in which he:

> assign to you and your heirs and successors, kings of Castile and Leon, forever, together with all their dominions, cities, camps, places, and villages, and all

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[1] This is the Anglicised spelling of his name. In his native Genoa he was called Cristoforo Colombo, whilst in Spain he was known as Cristobal Colon.

[2] The islands of south and south-east Asia.

> rights, jurisdictions, and appurtenances, all islands and mainlands found and to be found, discovered and to be discovered towards the west and south, by drawing and establishing a line from the Arctic pole, namely the north, to the Antarctic pole, namely the south, no matter whether the said mainlands and islands are found and to be found in the direction of India or towards any other quarter, the said line to be distant one hundred leagues towards the west and south from any of the islands commonly known as the Azores and Cape Verde.[3]

As a follow-up to this the Treaty of Tordesillas was signed with Portugal in 1494 in which both powers agreed that all possessions found to the west of the meridian running 370 leagues to west of Cape Verde Islands would belong to Spain and those to the east of it to Portugal. *Inter Caetera* and the Treaty of Tordesillas became the basis of the Spanish Crown's entire claim to sovereignty over the New World. The *Inter Caetera* is the Papal Bull referred to on numerous occasions when Cromwell and his government attempted to justify their attack on Spanish possessions in the West Indies. With Papal assurance that they could keep what they found, the Spanish over the next century explored and colonised vast stretches of the region, starting with the main Caribbean islands of Cuba, Hispaniola, Puerto Rico and Jamaica and then the mainland of Central and South America. Soon the vast empires of both the Aztec and the Inca had been swallowed up and the Spanish then dominated the land from what is now the United States of America through to the tip of South America, with the exception of Brazil, which being to the east of the arbitrary line drawn as a result of the 1494 treaty, was controlled by Portugal. From these territories flowed massive amounts of trade and wealth as Spain plundered the gold and silver mines whilst it systematically sought to exclude all other nations from encroaching on its possessions.[4] Not surprisingly the other nations of Europe coveted the riches that Spain (and Portugal) were greedily amassing. The Reformation in Europe during the latter half of the sixteenth century saw a seismic shift in the relationships between the powers of Europe. As nations such as England, Scotland, the Dutch Republic and some German states turned Protestant they no longer held any allegiance to the Pope, nor to any of the numerous Bulls issued by the Papacy. As such they openly questioned the right of Spain to lay claim to the vast lands of the New World and began to send out their own voyages of discovery to encroach upon the Spanish possessions and take what spoils they could. With Protestant powers in an almost permanent state of conflict with the Catholic nations in Europe, inevitably this led to fighting along the fringes of the Spanish possessions in the New World, as the encroachment continued. Spain, unable to protect its possessions completely, was unable to stop the English and Dutch, as well as the French, from grabbing land where

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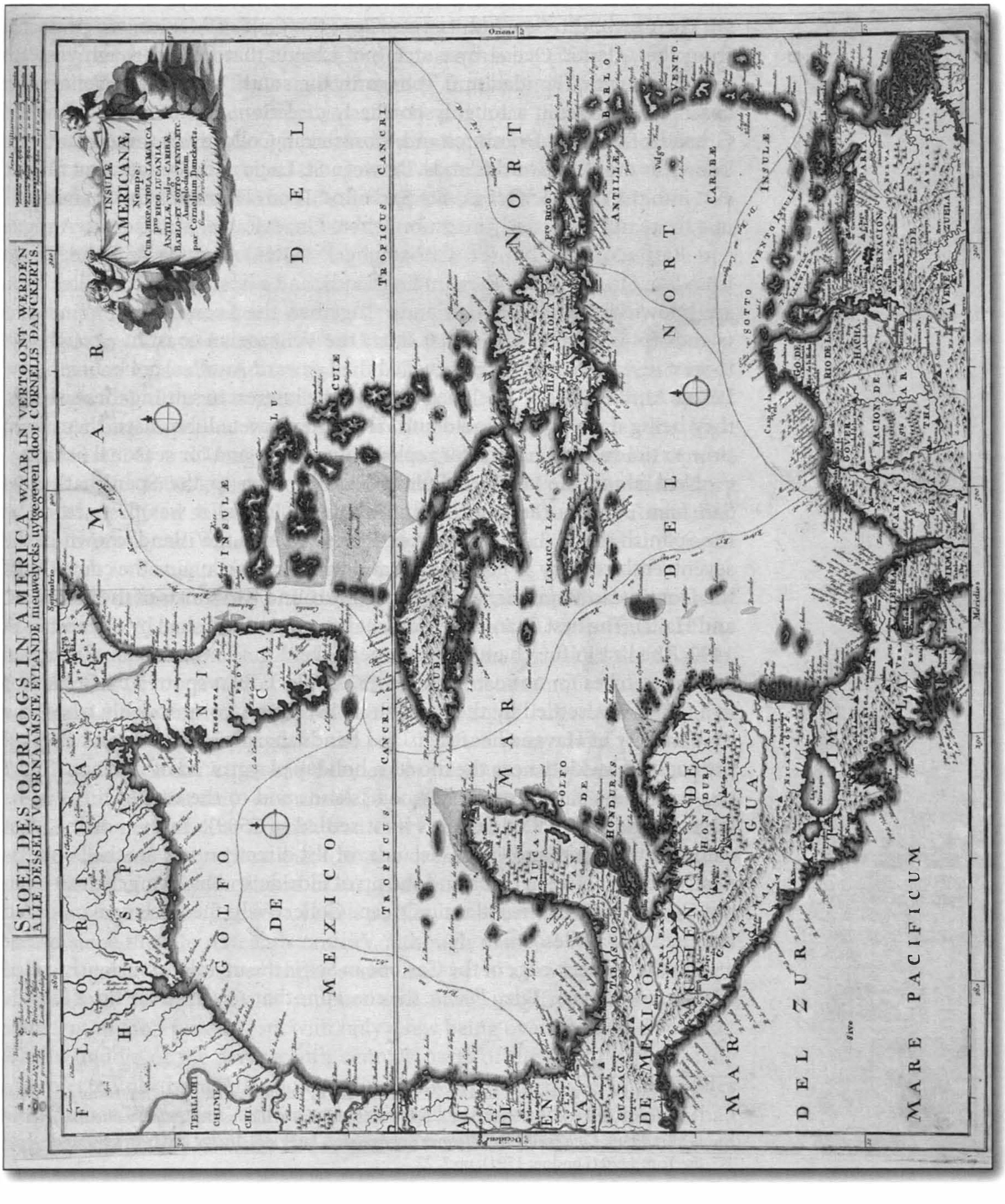
[3] F.G. Davenport and C.O. Paullin (eds), *European Treaties Bearing on the History of the United States and Its Dependencies* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1917), pp.71–78.

[4] See Roger Bigelow Merriman, *The rise of the Spanish empire in the Old world and the New*, Vols 1–4 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918–1934) for a detailed history of the Spanish expansion in the New World until the death of King Philip II in 1598. Also Herbert E. Bolton, 'The Epic of Greater America', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 38, No. 2, 1933.


STOEL DES OORLOGS IN AMERICA WAAR IN VERTOONT WERDEN
ALLE DESSELF VOORNAAMSTE EYLANDE nieuwelycks uytgegeven door CORNELIS DANCKERTS.
INSULÆ AMERICANÆ,
Nempe:
CUBA, HISPANIOLA, IAMAICA,
Pto RICO, LUCANIA,
ANTILLÆ, vulgo CARIBÆ,
BARLO-ET SOTTO-VENTO, ETC.
par Cornelium Danckerts.
MAR DEL NORT
GOLFO DE MEXICO
MAR DEL ZUR
MARE PACIFICUM
FLORIDA
HISPANIA
LUCAIÆ INSULÆ
TROPICUS CANCRI
CUBA
HISPANIOLA
IAMAICA I.
Pto RICO
ANTILLÆ
vulgo
CARIBÆ
BARLO VENTO
SOTTO VENTO INSULÆ
GOLFO DE HONDURAS
YUCATAN
HONDURAS
GUATIMALA
NICARAGUA
AUDIENCIA DE MEXICO
TABASCO
GUAXACA
TIERRA FIRMA
VENEZUELA
RIO DE LA HACHA
CARTAGENA
Septentrio
Meridies
Oriens
Occidens

Insulae Americanae Nempe
Cuba, Hispaniola, Jamaica,
Pto. Rico, Lucania, Antillae
vulgo Caribae, Barlo-et
sotto-vento, Etc. *c.1680.*
Cornelius Danckerts. (The
Huntingdon Library, Art
Museum and Botanical
Gardens, California, 420924)
See colour plate B

they could. The British nation perhaps felt it had a better claim to the New World than Spain, for some believed that Caradoc of Llancarvan in the late thirteenth century had written that a Welsh prince had established a colony in North America – a story certainly in printed circulation in 1584 – and that his descendants were still living and speaking their native Welsh language in 1660 when Morgan Owen claims to have lived amongst them for a short time in South Carolina. However there is no substantive evidence to prove either claim.[5]

The Caribbean Sea and its extension, the Gulf of Mexico, are protected from the Atlantic Ocean by a string of islands that form a rough crescent beginning with Trinidad and Tobago in the south, just off the Venezuelan coast. From here, in a roughly northerly direction, are the small islands of Grenada, St. Lucia, Dominica and Montserrat. Collectively these islands are known as the Windward Islands. Between St. Lucia and Grenada, but further east into the Atlantic Ocean, sits Barbados. From Dominica the chain bends in a more north-westerly direction where Guadeloupe, Montserrat, Antigua and Barbuda, St. Kitts (St. Christopher), Nevis, Anguilla and the Virgin Islands are to be found. These main islands, and a host of much smaller ones, are known as the Leeward Islands. Together, the Leeward and Windward Islands (plus another chain that skirts the Venezuelan coast in a rough east to west direction, and which is called the Leeward Antilles) are known as the Lesser Antilles. The Spanish had shown little interest in settling these islands, they being devoid of the gold and silver they coveted, but used them from time to time as safe havens for replenishing water and for seasonal fishing.

Next along the chain is Puerto Rico. Known to the Spanish then as San Juan Bautista (and to the English as St. John's) it was first settled by the Spanish in 1508. To the west of Puerto Rico is the island known in the seventeenth century as Hispaniola (and which now contains the countries of the Dominican Republic, which takes up around two thirds of the landmass, and Haiti). The first Spanish settlement here was established by Columbus in 1492. The last in the chain is also largest island in the Caribbean, Cuba, and which stretches for almost 1,250km (777 miles). First spotted by Columbus in 1492, it was settled by the Spanish in 1511. At a point roughly where the modern city of Havana lies, the island bends sharply eastwards and ends off the coast of Mexico, near the modern holiday playground of Cancun. To the south of Cuba sit the small Cayman Islands and to the east of these is the larger island now called Jamaica (first settled in 1509). To the north-east of Cuba are the Turks and Caicos Islands, whilst directly north are the Bahamas neatly sitting between Cuba and the tip of Florida and blocking the exit from the Caribbean into the Atlantic Ocean. Collectively these islands are called the Greater Antilles.

On the western edge of the Caribbean Sea is the mainland variously called the *Spanish Main* or *Terra Firma*, the coast line that arcs from the tip of Florida

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[5] 'The History of Wales by Caradoc of Llancarvan', in David Powell (ed.), *The History of Wales* (Merthyr Tydfil, W. Williams, 1812, pp.194–196); John Williams, *An Enquiry into the Truth of the Tradition, Concerning the Discovery of America, by Prince Madog ab Owen Gwynedd, about the Year, 1170* (London: 1791), pp.7, 22.

(first settled in 1559), around Louisiana, Texas, into Mexico (conquered by Hernan Cortes between 1519–1521), through Guatemala (colonised from 1519), Honduras (1524), Nicaragua (1522), Costa Rica (1522), Panama (1538) then up to Colombia (1508) and Venezuela (1522). Throughout this region were numerous Spanish settlements, plantations and port cities such as Cartagena de Indias in Colombia, Porto Bello in Panama and Vera Cruz in Mexico. Through these hubs were imported essential supplies, luxury goods and settlers from Spain and from them were exported the plundered wealth of South America. Gold from Mexico, Panama and Peru with silver from the extensive mines of Potosi in Bolivia, and numerous other places, were loaded onto galleons and these fleets sailed in convoy for their own protection twice a year for Cadiz in Spain, via Havana. To the north lay the vast continent of North America which, though claimed by Spain, had not been settled other than in a few locations around the Gulf of Mexico and Florida.

Farther west still, on the far side of the South American landmass, was the Pacific coast of the Spanish empire which stretched from California (though never really colonised by the Spanish, it had been frequently visited by them since at least 1542), through Central America, Ecuador (then part of the Inca empire), Peru (conquered in 1532) and Chile (discovered by Ferdinand Magellan in 1520 and settled in 1535). Tierra del Fuego and the Straits of Magellan, at the southernmost tip of South America, were discovered when Magellan first circumnavigated the globe in 1520. Heading north up the South Atlantic coastline were the Spanish possessions in Argentina (first settled in 1536) and Uruguay (settled by both the Spanish and Portuguese after the mid 1500s). Next to these was the massive Portuguese territory of Brazil, occupied since 1500 under the terms of the Treaty of Tordesillas. Between Brazil and Venezuela were the tiny and struggling English, French and Dutch settlements in Suriname and Guyana.

By 1655 this Spanish Empire, though geographically massive, was sparsely populated by Spaniards outside of the major port cities whilst much of the indigenous population had died out since the first arrival of the Spanish. Large tracts of it were inaccessible due to the mountainous terrain and it was heavily forested. The Spanish settlements, some large but most quite small, were scattered throughout the region, often many days' travel apart. The major towns and cities had defences of varying quality but the Spanish were well aware that they were unable to protect anything but a small portion of this vast frontier. The English had every reason to be confident that an attack, wherever they chose and with the overwhelming numbers that they possessed, had every likelihood of succeeding.

Non-Iberian Europeans had been putting tenuous footholds in the New World since the late sixteenth century, although many of these settlements had struggled to survive whilst some had been abandoned completely as result of disease, lack of support and their inability to become self-sufficient in food production, with only a few being overrun by the Spanish. By the middle of the seventeenth century parts of the lengthy and totally unprotected northern Atlantic coastline, in what is today the United States and Canada, European settlements were well established. The Spanish had never attempted to colonise the continent north of Florida which allowed the English to found settlements in Newfoundland (initially 1583), Virginia (1606), the numerous New England settlements (from early 1600s) and Bermuda (1609). The French in Florida, Acadia and New France (Canada), the Dutch in New Amsterdam (New York) and the Swedes in New Sweden (along the River Delaware) all carved out territories for themselves along this eastern seaboard.

Farther south in the Caribbean the English had settled St. Christopher island in 1623, followed shortly after by Barbados (1625), Nevis (1628), Providence Island (1630), Antigua (1632), Barbuda (1632) and the Bahamas (1647). The French occupied Martinique and Dominica at the same time and even shared part of St. Christopher with the English. The French and the Dutch also managed to get a foothold on the Spanish Main, much farther south at Suriname, as had the English. The Spanish from time to time tried to evict these interlopers with varying degrees of success but as the land taken had hitherto been previously unoccupied by them and they having neither the resources nor the inclination to start wars over what they deemed insignificant specks on the map, their responses had been limited. The Spanish were too distracted by their various wars in Europe and too preoccupied with administering their own possessions and protecting their treasure fleets that returned their booty to Spain to worry too much about what the other Europeans were doing other than making diplomatic protests from time to time. It is interesting to note that prior to the English expedition of 1654 against French-occupied Acadia, and the West Indies in 1655, there had been not a single instance of a European power attempting to permanently seize the settled territory of another European nation in the New World.

When Venables and Penn's expedition arrived at the English colony of Barbados on 29 January 1655,[6] it was the largest and most significant of England's West Indian possessions. The island, claimed for England by Captain John Powell in 1625, became the centre of a disputed ownership claim between a group of London merchants and three influential peers of the realm over the next 30 years. Powell was a seafarer in the employ of the wealthy London-based merchant William Courten, to whom he reported the suitability of it being possessed and settled. At the time England was at war with Spain, and Charles I was more than willing to issue patents granting English opportunists the rights to settle territory in the West Indies. Courten and some other merchants approached the Earl of Pembroke to assist them to obtain the necessary grant from the King, which he duly did and which stated that Courten held the island in trust for the Earl. In 1627 the first settlers, 80 of them led by Powell's brother Henry, landed and commenced clearing of the land and establishing plantations. Courten and his associates financed the venture entirely themselves and began to administer the colony as a commercial enterprise. Three years later and once the settlement was starting to prosper, the 1st Earl of Carlisle petitioned the King to annul Pembroke's grant to Barbados on the basis that the King had previously given him the exclusive rights to establish colonies in the West Indies. To back up his claim Carlisle dispatched his own ships and men to the West Indies and on their arrival they simply arrested Powell and took over the governorship of Barbados. His actions were later given the tacit approval of King Charles whilst Pembroke seems to have done very little to intervene, and as a result Courten lost his entire investment. In 1646 the 2nd Earl of Carlisle transferred his grant of ownership to Lord Willoughby of Parham. Willoughby, a Presbyterian, had been a staunch supporter of Parliament during the Civil War and fought alongside the Earl of Manchester and Oliver Cromwell, but after the war became disillusioned with the cause as the Independents in the Army gained ascendancy in the post-war political settlement process. He became a leader of the Presbyterians in Parliament which put him on a collision course with the Army, and when the Army occupied London in 1647 Willoughby was arrested and detained for some months, after which he was released and fled to the Netherlands where he threw in his lot with the Royalist cause. As a result of his political alienation Willoughby's English estates were confiscated by Parliament. The exiled Charles Stuart agreed to appoint him governor of Barbados in 1650, which at that time, like many of the colonies, had remained loyal (or at least neutral) to the King during the Civil War.[7]

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[6] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.7.

Barbados had grown rapidly since its first settlement barely 30 years previously. By 1638 it was estimated that the population numbered over 6,000 people, of which only 766 held more than 10 acres of land. This number excluded the slave population with African heritage which amounted to some 5,680 in 1645. The economy was based on the production of cotton, ginger and tobacco for export to England with sugar cultivation starting to appear in the mid 1640s.[8] By 1645 the population was reckoned to be around 18,300 men of whom 11,200 held land, although mainly small holdings. Many of the English had been brought out as indentured servants to work on the plantations and at the end of their contracts they were granted small allotments of land on which to settle. At that time there were as many as 6,400 slaves also on the island. The English population swelled massively after 1645 as an influx of settlers arrived seeking to escape the ravages of the Civil War at home, along with numerous Royalists who emigrated after their estates were confiscated by Parliament. Colonel (Sir) Thomas Modyford was one such Royalist who arrived in 1647, as of course was Willoughby himself.[9] A fellow travelling companion of Modyford when he sailed from England was Richard Ligon, who was to later write extensively about daily life on Barbados during the mid seventeenth century.[10] By 1650 the population, including the slaves, was estimated to be around 30,000.

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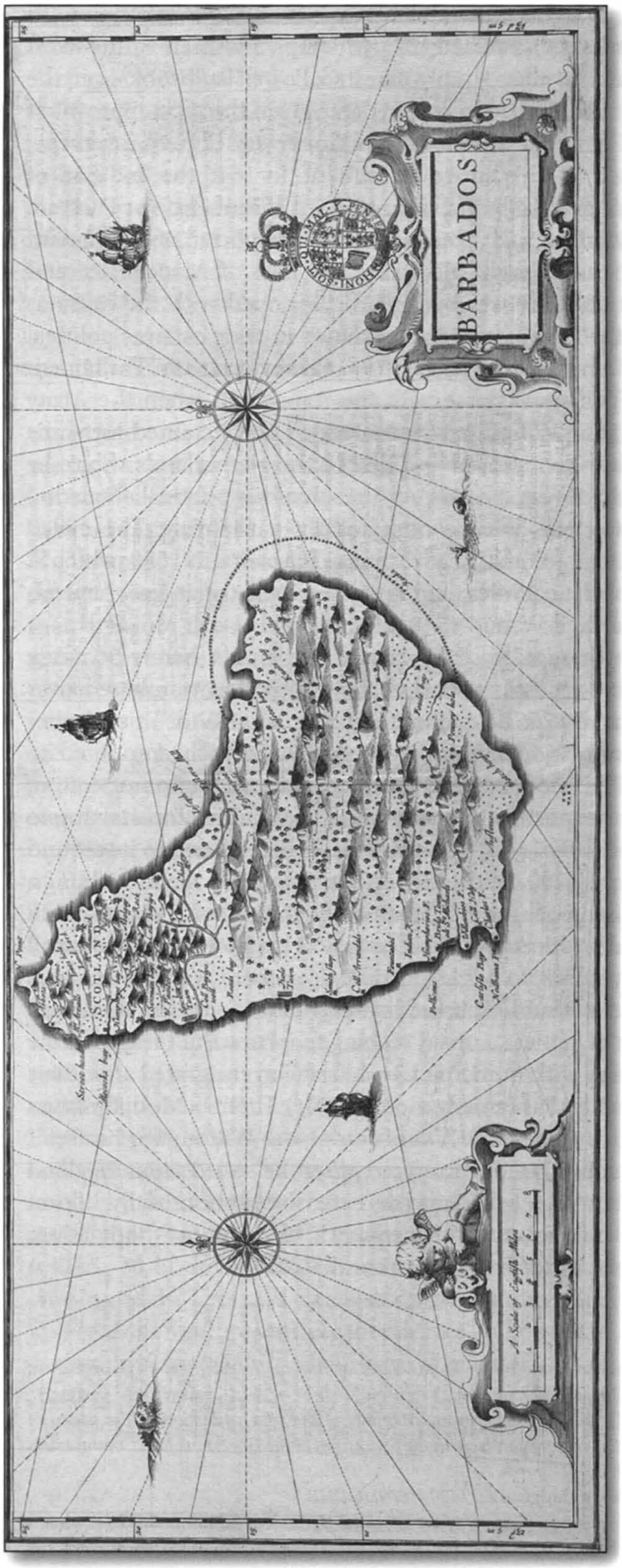
[7] Nicholas Darnell Davis, *The Cavaliers & Roundheads of Barbados, 1650–1652* (Georgetown, British Guiana: Argosy Press, 1887), pp.1–53.

[8] Davis, *Barbados 1650–1652*, pp.65–69; Anon., *Memoirs of the first settlement of the island of Barbados, and other the Carribbee islands, with the Succession of the Governors and Commanders* (London: 1743), pp.71–84.

[9] Nuala Zahedieh, *Sir Thomas Modyford (c. 1620–1679)*, *ODNB*.

[10] See Richard Ligon, *A true & exact history of the island of Barbadoes* (London: 1657 (reprinted 1673)); also Davis, *Barbados 1650–1652*, pp.75–112 for a more readable description of the


BARBADOS
SCOTLAND
A Scale of English Miles

Map of Barbados c.1640. Possibly John Speed. (The Huntingdon Library, Art Museum and Botanical Gardens, California, 093:799) See colour plate C.

Barbados along with the other American colonies played no significant role during the Civil War. The population was mostly inclined to support the Royalist cause, which was not surprising given that it was a royal land grant, whilst this feeling of sympathy intensified after the execution of Charles I and with the growing numbers of Royalist *émigrés* arriving. Although the colony had a Parliamentarian-appointed governor, Captain Philip Bell, those on the island loyal to Parliament were in the minority. In early May 1650 the Royalists politically outmanoeuvred their opponents within the colony's governing assembly and publicly proclaimed Charles Stuart King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland. Modyford played a leading role in these events. Willoughby arrived in Barbados to claim the governorship for himself on 29 April 1650 but remained on board ship and did not announce his arrival until he had been able to ascertain the level of support he was likely to receive on the island. His arrival accelerated the endeavours of the Royalists on the island to gain control, and after the colony had proclaimed Charles as king Willoughby landed; with the support of the Royalists on the island he commenced his duties as governor and quashed any resistance the Parliamentarian party tried to offer. There had been no blood spilt thus far and Barbados was now loyal not to the government in London but the exiled King in France.[11]

Many of the Parliamentarian supporters on the island at this point chose to return to England rather live in what they now perceived to be a rebel colony, and so it was not long before Parliament heard of the Barbados defection. Acting quickly, on 3 October 1650, Parliament passed an Act requiring that the colonies of Barbados, Bahamas and Virginia all be reduced and forced back under the control of Parliament. As such a fleet was prepared under the command of Sir George Ayscue, to be dispatched first to the West Indies and then Virginia, to enforce this decree. Having first subdued the Isles of Silly in June 1651 the fleet only departed for the West Indies on 5 August. Alongside Ayscue, who was the military commander of the expedition, was the merchant Daniel Searle who was to be appointed as civilian governor once the island had been forced, militarily if necessary, to return its allegiance to Parliament.

Once news of Parliament's intentions reached Barbados, in early 1651, Willoughby started to prepare the island to resist any attack by the Parliamentarian forces. Soldiers were raised across the island and defences were prepared and so by the time Ayscue arrived off the coast of Barbados on 15 October 1651 the Royalist party was firmly resolved and prepared to resist. Encouraged by news recently received that King Charles had invaded England in the summer at the head of a Scottish army, and then by a rumour that Cromwell had been defeated and killed, Willoughby was ready to

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island in the mid seventeenth century. It was not just willing settlers that found their way to Barbados but prisoners from England were sent there in 1654 as well. See Sainsbury (ed.), *CSPD 1574–1660*, p.419; TT, John Hall (ed.), *Mercurius Politicus, 10 August–17 August 1654*, no. 218, London, 123:E.808[17].

[11] For more details on the Royalist coup and its aftermath see TT, Nicholas Foster, *A briefe relation of the late horrid rebellion acted in the island Barbadas, in the West-Indies*, 1650, 179:E.1358[3]; Davis, *Barbados 1650–1652*.

make his stand. There then followed a series of messages between Ayscue and Willoughby, the former demanding the latter to surrender and latter refusing. This dialogue continued for some weeks as Ayscue attempted to secure the surrender of the island without resorting to force. With no land forces at his disposal Ayscue had little option but to blockade the island, undermine the Royalists' resolve and push for a negotiated settlement. By the middle of November Ayscue had heard definite news that Charles had been defeated at the Battle of Worcester and had become a fugitive which he immediately notified Willoughby of, and from this point onwards the resolve of the Royalists began to waver, and then collapsed. Around the same time additional ships arrived to reinforce Ayscue, who was now able to take the offensive when he sent a small landing party ashore and in a scrappy engagement with the Royalists a few men on both sides were slain. Though not a decisive engagement it helped to further undermine the resolve of Willoughby's followers. Seeing the writing on the wall, Modyford secretly notified Ayscue in December that he was prepared to recognise Parliament instead of the King and that he would use his influence to subvert others on the island to his way of thinking. He was able to erode Willoughby's support amongst some of the larger landowners who began to see their interests would be best served by throwing in their lot with Parliament rather than continue with what now seemed to be a lost cause. On 10 January 1652 Willoughby, now with almost no support, agreed to capitulate and signed the *Charter of Barbados* which formally handed over the government to Ayscue and Parliament. The terms imposed were very generous with almost none of the rebels being brought to account. Ayscue wisely deemed it more beneficial to placate and retain them in the colonial society rather than to impose punitive sanctions which would likely cause resentment and future hostility. Willoughby and a few of the ringleaders were banished, however. Ayscue soon departed for Virginia and Searle was left behind as governor, a position he was still holding when Penn and Venables arrived three years later.[12]

Barbados was ideally situated as stepping stone from which Venables and Penn could launch their attack on the Spanish Empire in the Americas. With favourable winds it was easily reached from England, with the voyage taking just six weeks. The colony was now well established with a large population and a diverse economy that was self-sufficient in producing the staples of its food needs. It was large enough to allow the army to disembark and commence training and it had a significant population from which to recruit more men to fill the ranks of the regiments from England. It also had some surplus food stocks that could be purchased as well as weaponry to augment that which the army had brought with it. It was also far enough away from the main Spanish transport routes to be secure from either attack or from being spied upon. From Barbados the prevailing winds would allow the English to proceed either to the mainland from which they could attack the major port cities of Cartagena

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[12] Foster, *A briefe relation of the late horrid rebellion*; Davis, *Barbados 1650–1652*.

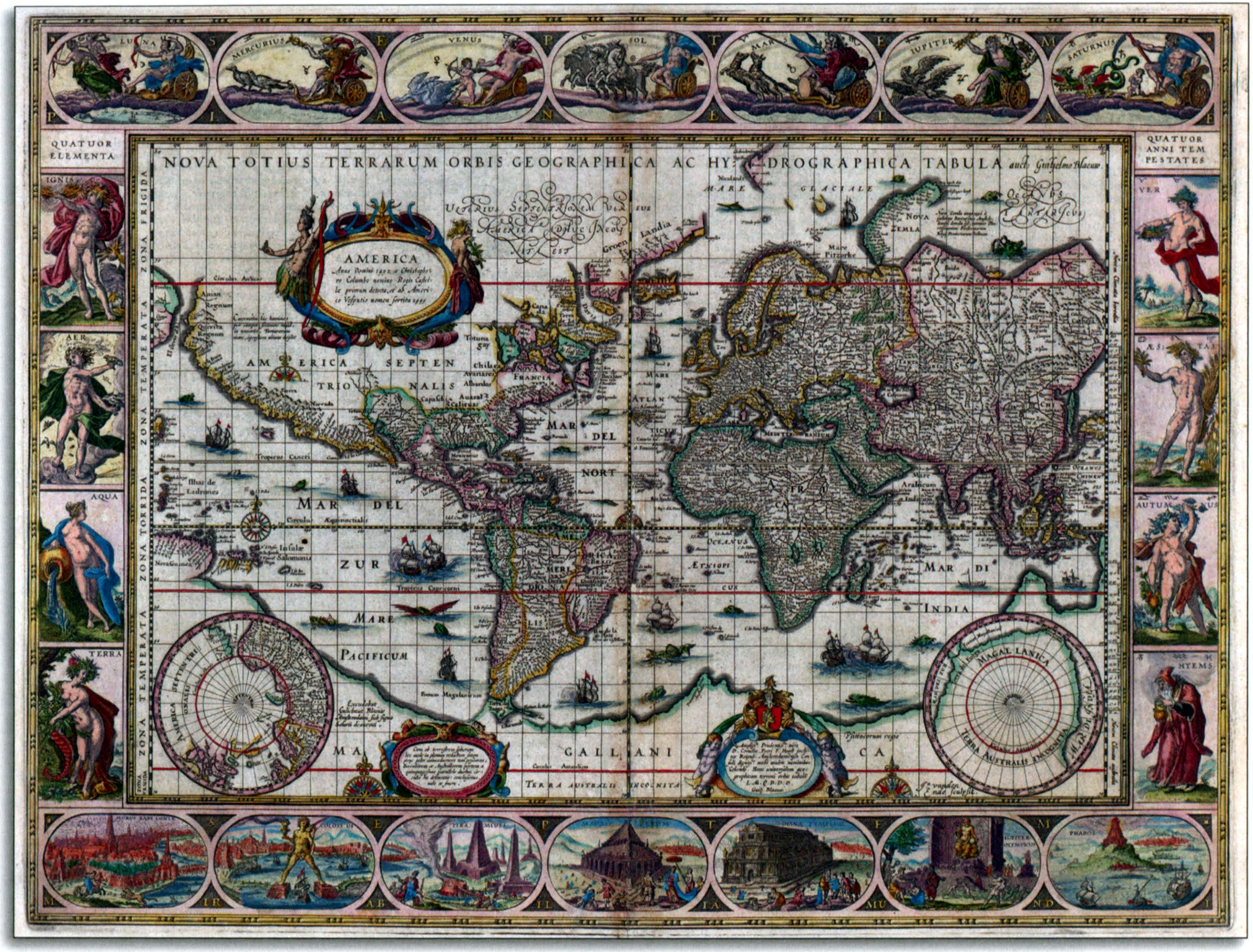
NOVA TOTIUS TERRARUM ORBIS GEOGRAPHICA AC HYDROGRAPHICA TABULA auct. Gulielmo Blaeuw.
LUNA
MERCURIUS
VENUS
SOL
MARS
JUPITER
SATURNUS
QUATUOR ELEMENTA
IGNIS
AER
AQUA
TERRA
QUATUOR ANNI TEMPESTATES
VER
ÆSTAS
AUTUMNUS
HYEMS
AMERICA
AMERICA SEPTENTRIONALIS
MAR DEL NORT
MAR DEL ZUR
MARE PACIFICUM
MAR DI INDIA
MARE GLACIALE
NOVA ZEMLA
Groenlandia
FRANCIA
AFRICA
OCEANUS ÆTHIOPICUS
MAGALLANICA
TERRA AUSTRALIS INCOGNITA
MAGALLANICA
ZONA FRIGIDA
ZONA TEMPERATA
ZONA TORRIDA
ZONA TEMPERATA
ZONA FRIGIDA
Tropicus Cancri
Circulus Æquinoctialis
Tropicus Capricorni
Circulus Arcticus
Circulus Antarcticus
PHAROS
COLOSSUS

PLATE A

Nova totius terrarum orbis geographica ac hydrographica tabula, c.1635–1649, Jan Aertse van den Ende. (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1958-66)

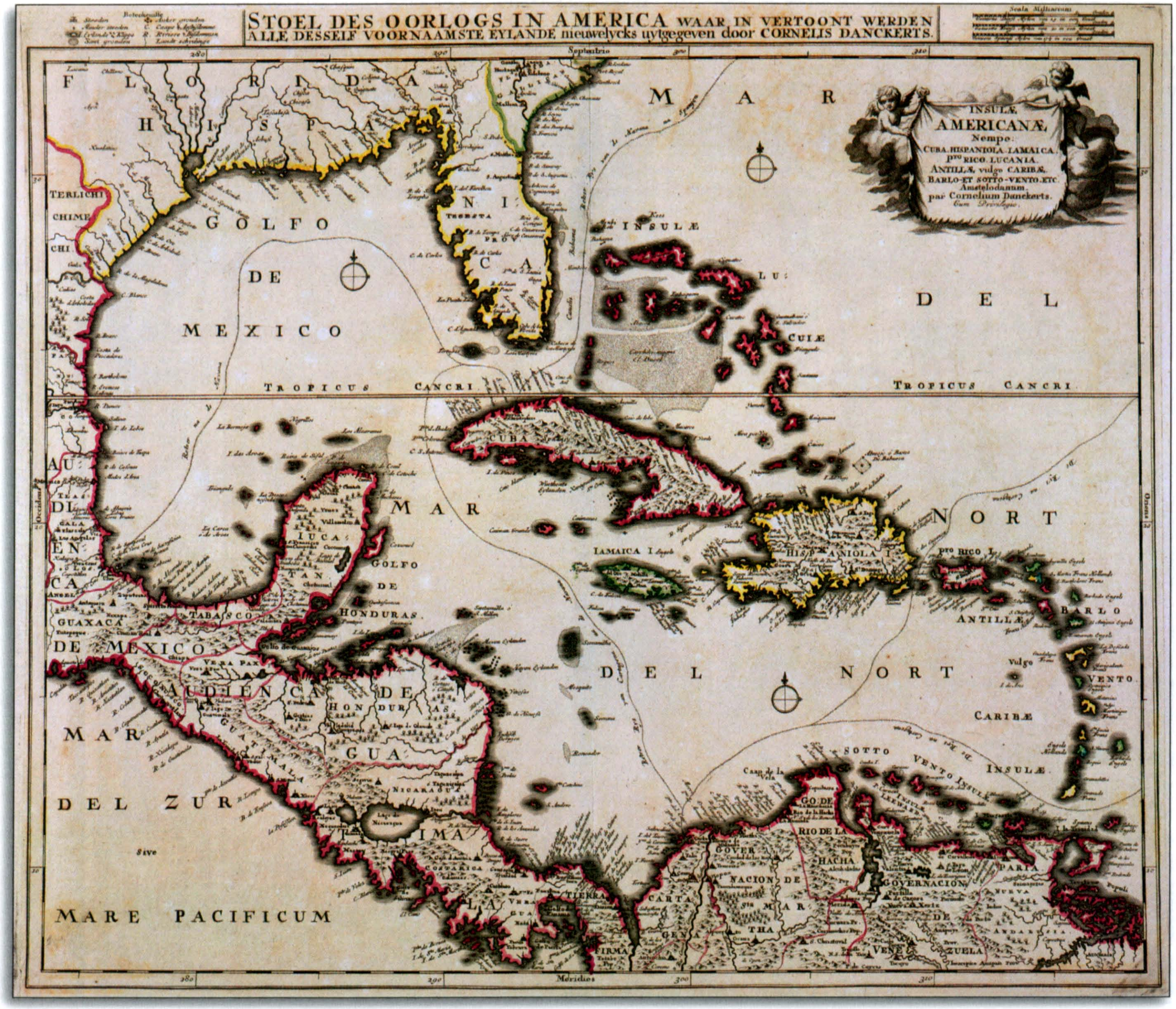
STOEL DES OORLOGS IN AMERICA WAAR IN VERTOONT WERDEN ALLE DESSELF VOORNAAMSTE EYLANDE nieuwelycks uytgegeven door CORNELIS DANCKERTS.
INSULÆ AMERICANÆ, Nempe: CUBA, HISPANIOLA, IAMAICA, P^TO RICO, LUCANIA, ANTILLÆ vulgo CARIBÆ, BARLO-ET SOTTO-VENTO, ETC. Amstelodamum, par Cornelium Danckerts. Cum Privilegio.
FLORIDA
HISPANICA
GOLFO DE MEXICO
MAR DEL NORT
INSULÆ LUCUÆ
TROPICUS CANCRI
CUBA
IAMAICA I.
HISPANIOLA
P^TO RICO I.
ANTILLÆ vulgo CARIBÆ
BARLO VENTO
SOTTO VENTO INSULÆ
GOLFO DE HONDURAS
IUCATAN
TABASCO
GUAXACA
AUDIENCA DE MEXICO
AUDIENCA DE GUATIMALA
HONDURAS
NICARAGUA
MAR DEL ZUR Sive MARE PACIFICUM
TIERRA FIRMA
CARTAGENA
GOVERNACION DE SANTA MARTHA
RIO DE LA HACHA
VENEZUELA
NUEVA ANDALUSIA
PARIA
Septentrio
Meridies
Oriens
Occidens
Scala Milliarum

PLATE B

Insulae Americanae
Nempe Cuba, Hispaniola,
Jamaica, Pto. Rico, Lucania,
Antillaevulgo Caribae,
Barlo-et sotto-vento, Etc.
c.1680. Cornelius Danckerts.
(The Huntingdon Library,
Art Museum and Botanical
Gardens, California, 420924)

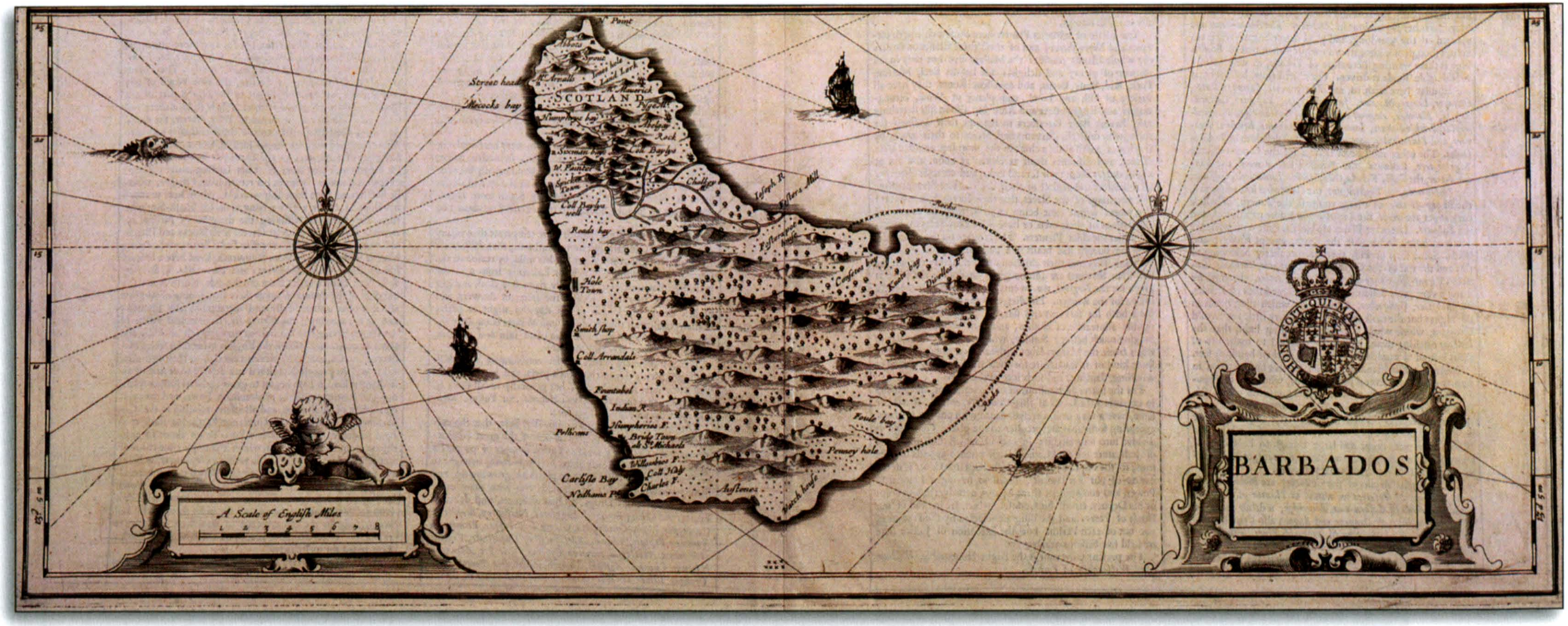
BARBADOS
HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE
A Scale of English Miles
N. Point
Abbots
Sprout
Vines hole
Laid Lock
Stroat head
Mt. Arnalls
Mt. Maurick
SCOTLAND
Pigeon
Meacocks bay
Humphreys bay
Abelgar
Rock
Sixeman bay
Coll Baylys
W. Painter
Spickes Town
Chalfey
Joseph R.
Fosters Mill
Coll Baylys well
Roads bay
Fosteraspot house
Hole Town
Confesses bay
Kents bay
Divelles Pt.
Smith shop
Coll Arrandale
Fountabel
Indian R.
Humpheries F.
Pellicons
Bride Town al. St. Michaels
Foule bay
Penney hole
Willowbies F.
Coll Holy
Carlisle Bay
Charles F.
Nelhams Pt.
Austones
Watch house
Rocks

PLATE C

Map of Barbados *c*.1640, cropped to Barbados only. Possibly John Speed. (The Huntingdon Library, Art Museum and Botanical Gardens, California, 093:799)

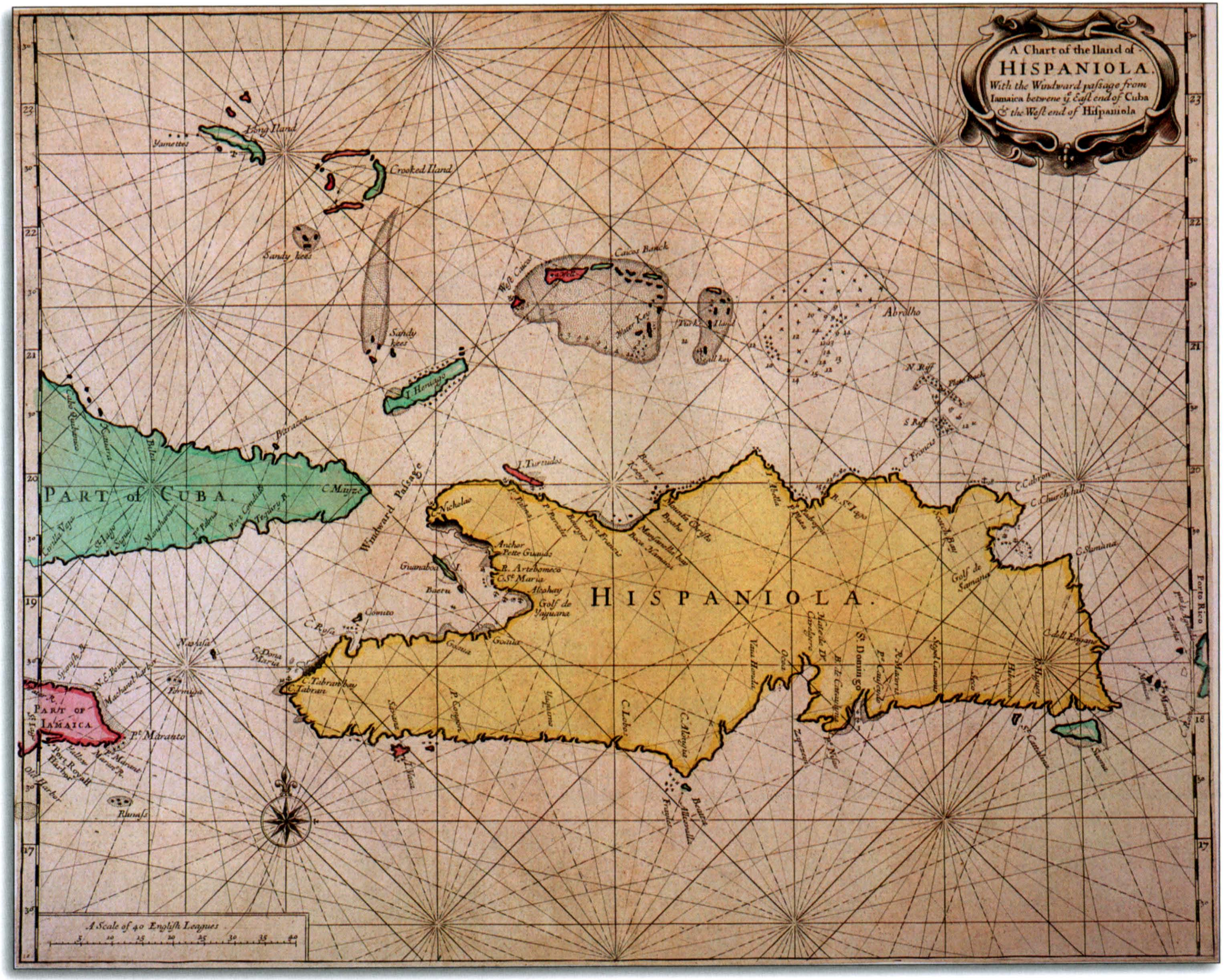
A Chart of the Iland of
HISPANIOLA.
With the Windward paſsage from
Iamaica betwene yͤ East end of Cuba
& the West end of Hiſpaniola
HISPANIOLA.
PART of CUBA.
PART OF JAMAICA
Windward Passage
Long Iland
Crooked Iland
Yametres
Sandy kees
Caicos Bank
West Caicos
Abrolho
N. Riff
S. Riff
I. Heneago
I. Turtudos
C. Mayze
Baracoa
St. Nicholas
Guanabo I.
C. Rosa
C. Tabran
C. Lobos
C. Alongia
St. Domingo
R. St. Iago
Golf de Samana
C. Samana
C. Cabron
C. Churchhill
C. dell Engano
Porto Rico
Savona
St. Cattalina
Beatta
Altavalla
Frayles
I. Vaca
P. Cangon
Yaquimo
Golf de Yaguana
Alcahay
Petite Guaves
P. Francois
C. Francois
Manzanilla bay
Port Royall Harbor
Old Harbor
Pt. Maranto
Rimas
Navasa
Formiga
A Scale of 40 English Leagues
5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40
17
18
19
20
21
22
23

PLATE D
Chart of the Island of Hispaniola With the Windward passage from Jamaica between the East end of Cuba & the West end of Hispaniola, *c.*1680. John Thornton. (The Huntingdon Library, Art Museum and Botanical Gardens, California, 093:782 M)

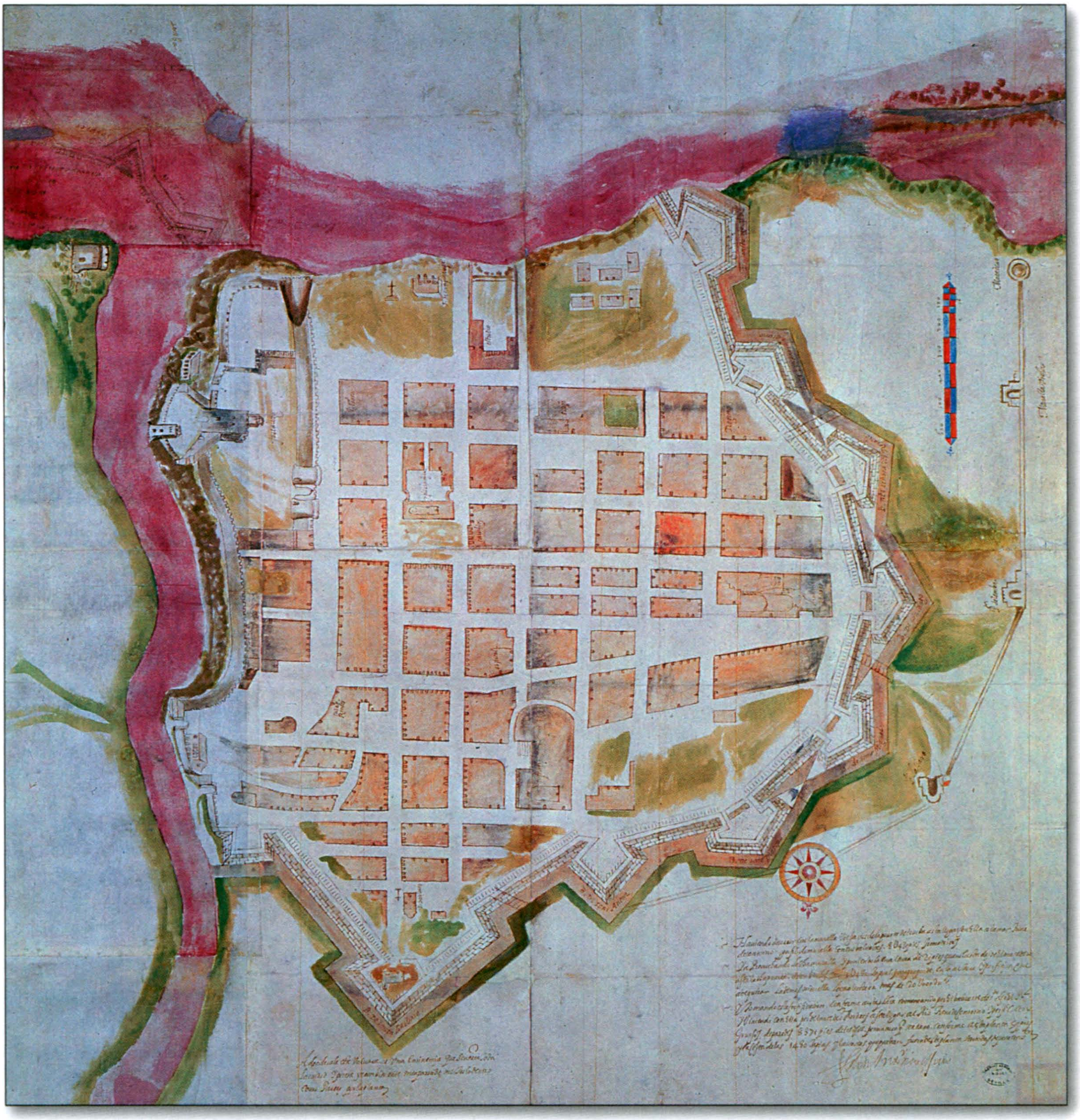

PLATE E

Plano de la ciudad de Santo Domingo (República Dominicana) *c.*1608, Anon. (Archivo General de Indias MP-SANTO-DOMINGO, 22)

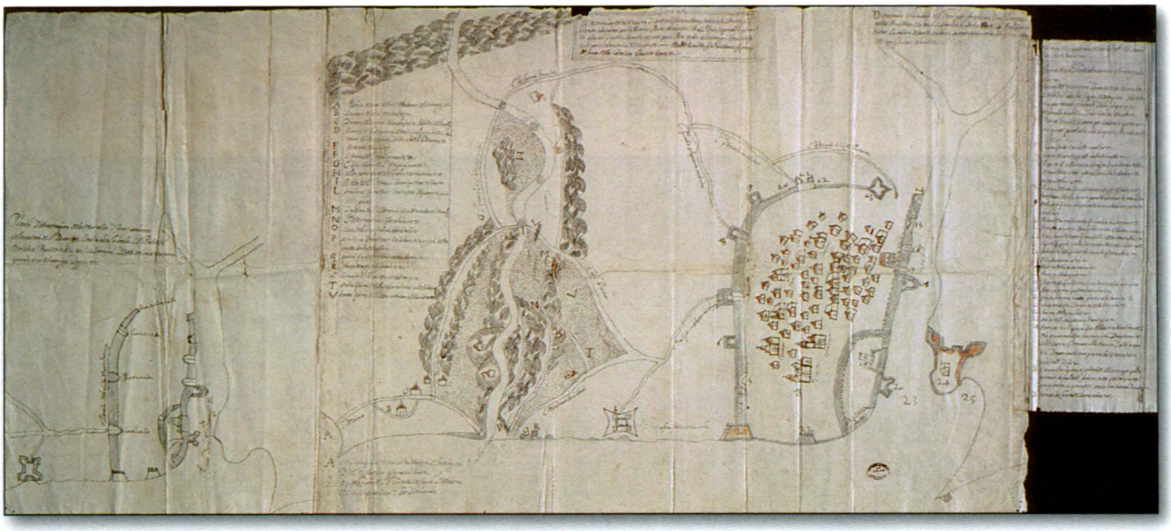

PLATE F.1

Plano de la ciudad de Santo Domingo y sus alrededores (República Dominicana) c.1656. Francisco Vicente Duran. (Archivo General de Indias. MP-SANTO-DOMINGO, 52)

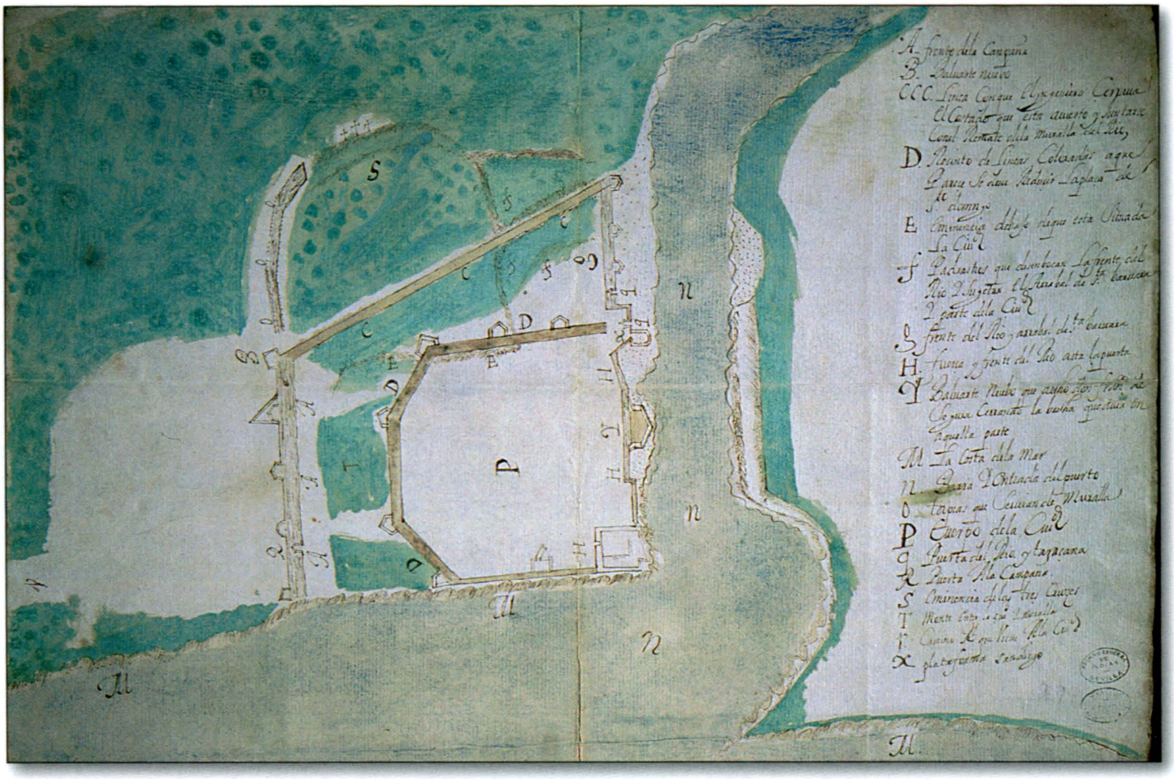
A. frente dela Campana
B. Baluarte nuevo
M La Costa dela Mar
P Cuerpo dela Ciud
R Puerta dla Campana
S Eminencia de las tres Cruzes

PLATE F.2

Plano del campo de la ciudad de Santo Domingo, entre la muralla y el río Haina (República dominicana) c.1679. Anon. (Archivo General de Indias, MP-SANTO-DOMINGO, 77)

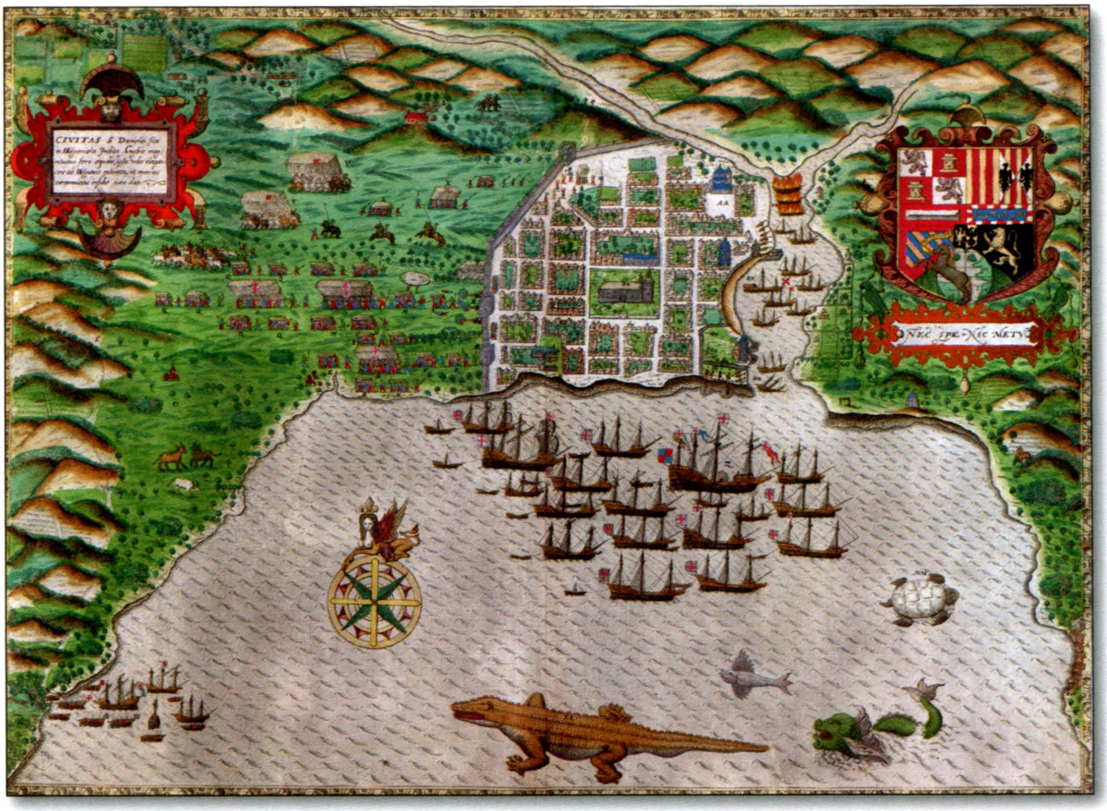
NEC SPE NEC METV

PLATE G.1

Plano del campo de la ciudad de Santo Domingo, entre la muralla y el rio Haina (República dominicana) c.1679. Anon. (Archivo General de Indias, MP-SANTO-DOMINGO, 77)

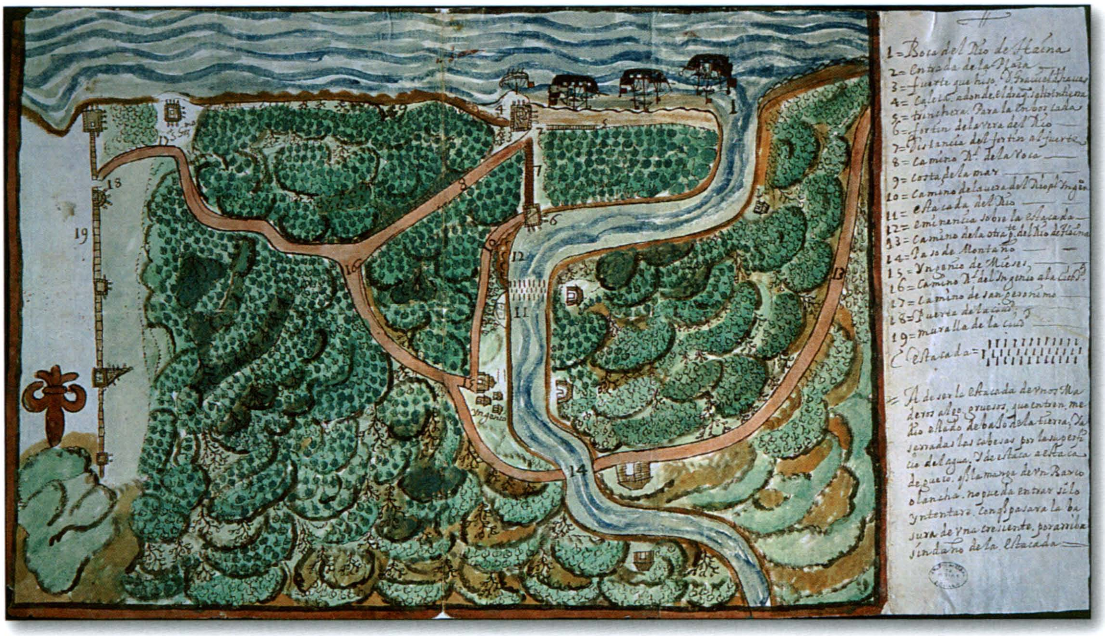
1=Boca del Rio de Haina
2=Entrada de la Playa
3=fuerte que hiso D. Fran.co Draque
4=Caleta adonde el draq. se hizo en tierra
5=trinchera para la enboscada
6=fortin de la vera del Rio
7=Distancia del fortin al fuerte
8=camino R.l de la Boca
9=costa de la mar
10=camino de la vera del Rio p.a el Ingen.o
11=estacada del Rio
12=eminencia sobre la estacada
13=camino de la otra p.te del Rio de Haina
14=Paso de Montaño
15=Yngenio de Mieses
16=camino R.l del Yngenio a la ciud.d
17=camino de san geronimo
18=fuerte de la ciud.d
19=muralla de la ciud.d
estacada=
Ha de ser la estacada de unos maderos algo gruesos, que entren medio estado debaxo de la tierra, y aserradas las cabesas por la superficie del agua, y de estaca a estaca de gueco, q la manga de un Barco o lancha no pueda entrar si lo yntentare, con q pasara la basura de una creciente por arriba sin daño de la estacada
1
4
5
6
7
8
11
12
13
14
16
18
19

PLATE G.2

Map and views illustrating Sir Francis Drake's West Indian voyage, 1585–6 (San Domingo), *c.*1589. Baptista Boazio. (The Library of Congress, Washington DC, G3291.S12 s000. B6)

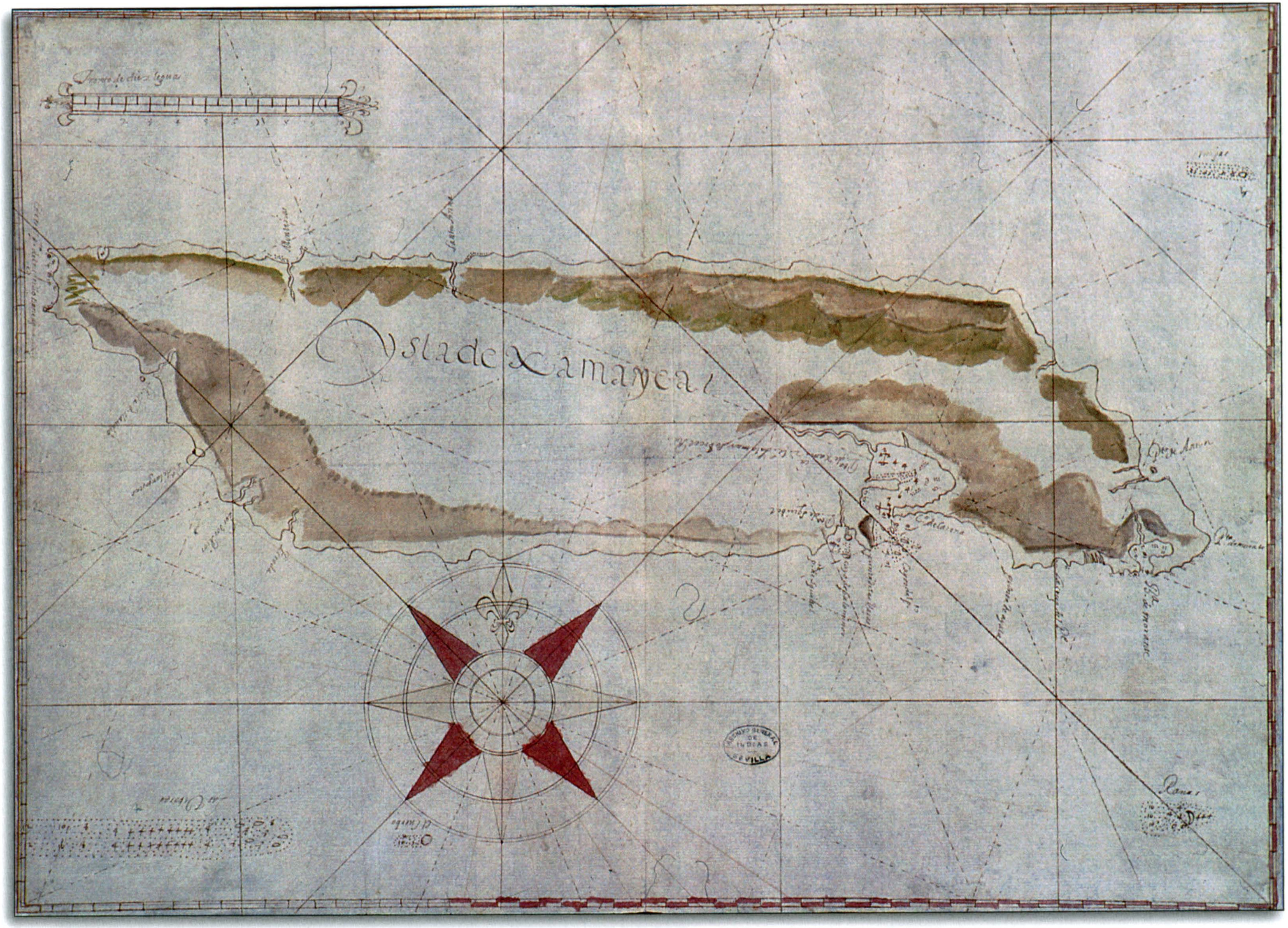
Ysla de Xamayca
Pta. de morante

PLATE H

Ysla de Xamaica c.1656. Anon. (Archivo General de Indias, MP-SANTO-DOMINGO, 53) and Porto Bello. Alternatively they could proceed along the island chain of the Antilles to attack the Spanish islands of Hispaniola or Cuba. However the English decided to proceed, Barbados was the perfect base from where to start. With a government now loyal to the Commonwealth, Venables and Penn had been instructed to use the colony as a staging post and they received assurances in London that they would be warmly welcomed and that they would be offered as much assistance as they needed.

The society upon on the island of Barbados was very different to the one that most of the English had so recently just left. Slavery was rife, with major landowners having upwards of 100 slaves to command as they pleased. These slaves, indigenous people as well as African-Caribbeans, were born into perpetual bondage. Each was allowed as many wives 'as they find thayer bodie abell'. It was reckoned that a newborn slave was worth five pounds, these then 'cost them noething the bringing up, they goe all wayes naked: some planters will have 30 more or less about 4 or 5 years ould: they sele them from one to the other as we doue sheep'.[13] The island boasted a cosmopolitan population of Dutch, French, Scots, Spanish, Irish and, of course, English. None of the commentaries on this particular campaign have much good to say about the inhabitants or the island. One described it as 'the Dunghill wharone England doth cast forth its rubidg: Rodgs and hors and such like peopel are those which are gennerally Brought heare. A rodge in England will hardly make a cheater heare: a Baud brought over puts one a demuor comportment, a whore if hansume makes a wife for sume rich planter'.[14] A second, after describing the English soldiers as a mixture of vagabonds, robbers and renegade servants, passed this judgement upon the Barbadians: 'certainly these islanders must be the very scums, and mere dregs of corruption, and such upon whose endeavours it was impossible to expert a blessing'.[15] Despite this the land was rich 'all waies Grone and baring fruit' with its main commodities of sugar, cotton and tobacco being exported to England. Fruit was to be found in abundance, pineapples and prickly pears, as well as oranges and limes. Their food was mainly the potato (the South American variety rather than the sweet potato of North America which was very popular in England at the time), whilst their bread was made from cassava roots, and their main drink was derived from 'potatoe routes, thay being boyled thay brus them, and put them in Water, and then straine them: and that they drink.' Meat was in short supply however, the best of which was pork which 'is far better than our English porke'.[16]

Despite the assurances received in England that Barbados would provide a warm welcome to the expedition Venables and Penn found Barbados interested only in its own self-preservation, its inhabitants sceptical as to the merits and likely success of the expedition, whilst many feared the consequences that this unprovoked attack might have upon them from the Spanish, with whom the islanders had come to an uneasy peace. They soon resented the presence of the

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[13] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.146.

[14] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.146.

[15] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.379.

[16] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.146.

English army as it quickly requisitioned its meagre food supplies, indiscriminately recruited the men it relied upon to farm its plantations and stripped it of the weaponry needed to defend the island should any Spanish retaliatory attack be launched against it. Furthermore it did not take kindly to being ordered around by the government in London who, many still believed, had no jurisdiction over the island. After two months in Barbados the islanders were grateful when the fleet departed, and they later did virtually nothing to assist the new Jamaica colony as it struggled to survive and actively discouraged any of their own settlers from transplanting themselves there. No doubt Venables and Penn were shocked to find on their arrival in the harbour of Bridgetown numerous Dutch vessels trading in an open and brazen contravention of the Navigation Act and in the full knowledge, and tacit support of, the colonial government. These Dutch merchant vessels were in varying stages of unloading when the fleet arrived and they refused to declare their invoices or bills of lading when demanded to do so by Venables, whilst 'having almost Sold all their Goods and Landed them before we came, and the Inhabitants will not discover to whom they were Sold'.[17] In fact the islanders deliberately obstructed Venables efforts to investigate who was responsible for the trade. Irrespective of the English law, Barbados had for many years come to rely upon these interloping Dutch traders to supply their needs for both necessities and luxury goods, the supply of which had been severely dislocated since the outbreak of the Civil War. The heavy-handed English reaction to this, coupled with their lack of understanding of the practicalities of colonial survival, quickly alienated them from the more influential of the island's populace.

Venables harangued the colonial government in Barbados throughout his stay concerning their complicity in condoning this illicit trade. He would have made no friends, however, when he brought the matter of these illegal activities in front of the common court upon the island.[18] Despite the example made by Venables of seizing the Dutch ships, Winslow for one, believed the illicit trade would continue once the expedition left unless a ship was left behind to ensure compliance of the law. He also believed Searle was complicit in allowing the Dutch to freely trade on the island, much to the detriment of English merchants who complained at the loss of trading opportunities as the islanders seemed happier to trade with the Dutch than with themselves.[19] Nor did it improve his relations with the islanders when he notified the island assembly that his commission as commander-in-chief of English forces in America gave him the command of the Barbados militia and he then proceeded to inform the delegates of how these were to be organised and managed in future, overriding the arrangements Searle had effected since his arrival in 1652. This concerned the islanders so much that they requested Searle to intercede on their behalf with the Lord Protector directly to request that the command of the militia remain in the hands of the islanders, which he duly did.[20] How Cromwell reacted is not recorded but no doubt once news reached Barbados of Venables' defeat and his disgrace once he returned to England the islanders ignored his instructions anyway and continued to manage their affairs in this matter as they saw fit.

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[17] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.8.

[18] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.249.

[19] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.249.

[20] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.500.

Almost as soon as he arrived Venables started to complain about the attitude of the settlers towards the objectives of the expedition to the authorities in England. In February he was to write to the Council of State that immediately after landing they:

> fell about their work: but presently of our selves, and by friends privately, were assured (which we find true) that all the Inhabitants were against our design, as destructive to them, and that they would not really and cordially assist us. All the promises made to us in England of Men, Provisions, and Arms, we find to be but Promises'.[21]

The attitude of the islanders was exasperated by the method with which the English army sought to obtain new recruits. Upon arrival Venables instructed the army to 'entertain all men that were willing to engage in the present expedition' and to recruit any of the islanders that wished to enlist in the army. This quickly created a problem, as many of those who enlisted were indentured servants who had been shipped out to Barbados previously and who were under contract to work for the plantation owners. By enlisting in the army they were able to escape from their indentured contract, whilst the plantation owner received no compensation in return, despite the money that they had paid to obtain the services of the servant in the first place. 'Such was the irregularity of this carriage that many lost all of their servants, and others but few (if any) ... The loss of this nine months service was more considerable to most masters than twenty pounds sterling to some far exceeding that rate.'[22] Needless to say many of the larger landowners on the island did what they could to dissuade the local population from enlisting to avoid a labour shortage that would be both problematic for the landowners but also potentially dangerous with less able-bodied men on the island available for its defence.[23] Berkenhead believed much of the opposition that they faced from the islanders was on account of their 'malignat spiritts' and who do 'signifie their follyes in venting their calumnious words against not onely the designe, but the powers by which we come, and the parties employed in it'.[24] One islander by the name of Evans, who was described as a 'leveller', was so vocal in his criticism of the expedition that he was actually arrested and made to 'stand on the pillory the next market day for an houre, and six months imprisonment after.'[25] Whilst the majority of the islanders were hostile to both the presence of the army and the expedition Thomas Modyford, alone amongst the influential of the island, openly supported the quest. Having been a major advocate of the expedition in the first place and having provided Cromwell with his own plan of how it should proceed, he was blamed by many on the island for the problems caused by the arrival of the fleet; however he argued strongly that the expedition be supported and he was instrumental in persuading his fellow islanders to provide the horses that the army was desperately lacking, and allow the army to recruit on the island. Winslow described him as 'being master of more reason than half the island'.[26]

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[21] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*.

[22] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.572.

[23] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.158.

[24] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.157.

[25] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.157.

Relations with the islanders were not helped by the way with which the army acquired muskets from the local population. Venables had been assured the island would provide muskets upon his arrival, as many as 1,500, and it had been his plan to supplement his weaponry requirements on the island once he arrived. This became even more necessary once it was realised that many of the weapons the army had brought with them were defective and many more had failed to arrive as they had been loaded in the supply ships that had been delayed departing England. Whilst the pikes that were made locally were paid for, the 'firearms we took them where we could find them, without giving any satisfaction to the owners, the loss of their arms was not so much to be valued as their being sadly left naked, and almost wholly laid open to the mercy of their Negroes and other servants'.[27] Winslow believed 'that about six weeks before our arrival ... They [the firearms] were disposed of ... but a great fear seems to be upon them, lest their servants should rise, and when the fleet is gone, because so many of their freemen go with us; and if things are not better ordered, before we depart, as to the safetie of the place, the most justly feare it.'[28] The islanders were understandably aggrieved by the enforced requisitioning of their firearms.

Predictably with such an influx of strangers there was a great deal of tension between the islanders and the soldiers. At one point Penn was informed that his seamen were spoiling the sugar cane plantations on the island. He immediately ordered his sailors to 'keep ye pathwayes, & forsake offerine any wrong, committing any spoyle, or using any insurious language' whilst ashore, nor were they to 'carry fire, or take tobacco nigh ye Place where any Sugar canes are'. Furthermore Penn required that none of his seamen remain ashore 'after ye Gune discharged & ye watch set'. To enforce these orders two or three officers of the fleet and a similar number of officials of the island were to undertake patrols and 'all such Seamen as they shall apprehend or find tippling ... they comit to prison of the towne there to be kept until the next morning, & then to be brought on bord this ship to be tryed by a Councell of War.'[29] Penn further ordered that on the Sabbath the men of the fleet were to remain aboard their own ships lest 'under pretence of going on shore to hear the Gospel preached, are met with idling and mispending their time'. They were allowed, however, to visit other ships 'where the word of God is preached'. Furthermore he ordered that if any of the seamen:

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[26] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.250.

[27] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.572.

[28] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, pp.250–251.

[29] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.62–63.

> shall blaspheme the name of God, or swear, or be drunk on board any ship of the fleet ... [he] shall be punished after this manner (viz.) he shall pay five shillings, or twenty pounds [weight] of sugar, for every offence...and in the case of non-payment thereof, the party offending to suffer twenty stripes on the bare back.[30]

Perhaps not surprisingly some of the soldiers quarrelled amongst themselves upon their arrival after being able to drink for the first time in a month. Two men from the expedition being drunk quarrelled violently with each other upon their arrival on the island and 'almost destroyed themselves' before they were court-martialled and disciplined. Such was the constant lack of discipline in the army that court martials were held 'regulary and carefully' while it was in Barbados.[31]

Despite the friction between the English and the islanders, recruitment continued and soon the size of the army had swollen considerably. The army had departed England with a strength of around 2,500 men. At a muster taken in Barbados on 21 March the army numbered around 6,887 men and so over 4,000 men had actually been recruited on the island (excluding those raised on St. Christopher).[32] When possible the army was able to drill on the island. 'As for our regiments, they are excercised regimentally two days in the week, onely colonell Morris his regiment, which cannot have the like conveniency of meeting, for that it consists of planters, and therefore as yet live at theire owne dwellings.'[33] These recruits amounted to a considerable percentage of the working population and so it was no wonder the islanders themselves felt defenceless with such a number of able-bodied men departing the island. Their fears that the slaves might rise up were not entirely groundless and nor was their fear that the Spanish might attempt an attack upon the island in revenge for whatever was being planned by Venables and Penn.

Barbados itself raised one regiment for the army which was originally to be commanded by Colonel Lewis Morris, a local planter. However Morris, after raising his regiment, approached the commissioners and insisted that his debts be paid off at the expense of the English government before he would agree to serve, for he feared that in his absence his creditors would take advantage and seize his estate leading to the ruin of his financial affairs. After much negotiation it was decided that the commissioners did not have the authority to make such an agreement and so Morris refused to serve with the expedition. However, as a compromise, he agreed to not make this known until such time as his regiment had been boarded. This regiment was then given to Colonel Edward Doyley to command.[34]

Providing provisions for Venables growing army also created significant problems. With some of his supply ships delayed in England the fleet did not carry sufficient provisions to feed the growing army, and so they were necessitated to acquire food locally on the island, although it had always been the intention for the fleet to seek some resupply once it had arrived at Barbados. Venables decided to delay his departure from Barbados longer than he ought to have done as he waited for his missing supply ships to arrive, for he needed these supplies for the impending attack. But whilst the English waited 'we lye still, eatinge up the island, and our shipps eatinge up their provisions'.[35] The locally procured supplies were to be paid for by issuing bills of exchange that could be redeemed by the suppliers in England for cash. However there was a lack of supplies available on the island and Venables was to write:

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[30] Penn, *Memorials*, p.64.

[31] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.157.

[32] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.122.

[33] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.158.

[34] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.250.

> I suppose it was known to others, though not to me, but no provisions were to be gotten there, for so I found by experience, and the rates much higher than what they were in England for what I bought myself. So that these with some other reasons caus'd Mr. Winslow, one of the Commissioners, to say to diverse of the officers that we were betray'd.

With a shortage of provisions locally available to him he was forced to buy some victuals that had previously been rejected by the navy as being spoilt and subsequently sent to Barbados for disposal. Venables had no choice but to acquire, 'preferring bad food to none'.[36] He implored the Council of State to ensure that he receive a constant supply of provisions for 'Whatever is not to be gotten here, must be sent from England, or we must perish ... If Bread and Meal be not constantly sent us from England we must want it', and almost begging them he wrote 'Pray let not the old proverb be verified in us, "Out of sight, out of mind". If so you will quickly here we are not in this World &c.'[37] Penn echoed these sentiments in a letter to Cromwell dated 17 March in which he reported that due to the non-arrival of some of the supply ships and the increase in the size of the army following the recruitment in Barbados, 'our provision ... will, by so many mouths as must be fed upon it, soon come to fail, and we thereby [be] reduced to great extremities, unless, by your highness's goodness, some order be given for a timely and large supply to be sent unto us.' He added that he believed sufficient provisions could never be procured in Barbados 'nor any of the leeward islands'. Furthermore New England, from 'which we chiefly had reliance on for supplies, especially bread, cannot possibly furnish us with any considerable quantity', and so supplies could be received cheaper and quicker 'from Old England'.[38] Such was the shortage of provisions in the fleet when it arrived in Barbados that Penn was forced to cut the rations for the seamen 'that six should come to four men's allowance throughout the whole fleet, for the lengthening out of the victuals'.[39]

The lengthy sojourn in Barbados afforded the army time to review its weaponry, which it had not been able to do before departing as the loading of the arms in England had been a hurried, haphazard affair and it was apparent that no detailed inventory of what they had was produced nor a record of which vessel it had been loaded onto. The *Great Charity* and *Little Charity*, the *Pelican* and *Crow*, all supply ships carrying weaponry, had been delayed in England and either only joined the army after the Jamaica landing or never arrived at all.[40] Once on Barbados Venables had the time to review both the quantity and quality of the equipment he had with him and he was appalled by what he found. He claimed that of the equipment provided in England, 'almost half their arms [were] defective and altogether unservicable'. According to Venables he notified the Council of State of this before he sailed but was refused permission to 'stay for arms'.[41] Once on Barbados he claimed he 'found all Mens arms unfixed'.[42] Berkenhead also commented on the poor state of the equipment provided to the army and that it was 'not armed with such as Englishmen use to fight with'.[43] Venables claimed that of the 2,500 men brought from England, 'not One Thousand Six Hundred [were] well Armed'.[44] Seemingly promised that Barbados would furnish him with 1,500 muskets, he found that this had 'dwindled to One Hundred and Ninety' only.[45] According to Venables he first sought to make up this shortage by obtaining arms and ammunition from the fleet, as 'General Desbrow [Desborough] had assured me and the Officers in England that what was in the Fleet was and should be for the carrying on the Service, and at the commissioners disposal, and that there was enough to serve both us and the Fleet for some good time.' However he later claimed that the fleet was only prepared to provide:

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[35] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.158.

[36] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.12–13.

[37] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.8–9, 10.

[38] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.73–73.

[39] Penn, *Memorials*, p.67.

> Fifteen Shot a Man was all he could spare of his Ball, [and] a few Tuns of Match – But though he [Penn] had many hundred of Pikes in the Fleet to spare, and Lances to kill cows (which were for our use as well as the Fleets), yet we could not get one Pike or Lance, only some few half and quarter Pikes.

This did little to heal the growing rift between the army and fleet, and fuelled further their mutual distrust of each other. Insufficient as these were, Venables was necessitated to have pikes made on the island but these were 'so bad that I suppose Tom Tinker or Tom a Bedlam in England marches with better Weapons'.[46]

Not only was there a rift between the commanders of the expedition and the population on the island, but also the first signs of discord between the army and the navy were apparent in Barbados. Arguments about provisions, the role of Captain Poole in the Prize Office and the fleet providing the army with extra weapons from its own supply had created an atmosphere of mistrust and friction between both services. This mistrust was such that at an army council of war held on 18 March 1655 the army officers felt the need to propose a pact with Penn and his officers in which 'the land forces do promise never to desert the Fleet, [and] that General Penn and his officers mutually engage with the Land forces not to leave them until their Supplies come, which if they should miscarry, then to transport them back to England'.[47] That it was felt by the army that the fleet would abandon them is clearly indicative of the poor state that relations between the two had descended to. These relations would deteriorate further once Hispaniola was reached and were to rupture completely in Jamaica.

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[40] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.377; Penn, *Memorials*, p.72.

[41] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.6.

[42] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.12.

[43] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.158.

[44] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.9.

[45] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.8.

[46] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.12.

By the end of March the regiments had been fully recruited and Venables deemed it time to move on. In a letter to the Protector he freely admitted that he had tarried in Barbados too long, though he hoped that it would not be 'imputed as a fault to us I hope, considering our stores and other necessaries are all Behind'.[48] Venables was to attract much criticism for his lengthy stay there, to which he replied that it was impossible to sail without the necessary provisions. Events proved him right. Having outstayed his welcome after disrupting the vital trade of the island, having denuded it of a significant portion of its workforce and eaten up much of the food surplus on the island, Venables prepared to depart before the seasonal rains came that would create further disruption to his plans. Despite the evident problems that the expedition was encountering the army seemed confident and was eager to commence the invasion. Berkenhead wrote 'our officers and souldiers are highly bent upon action, and wish to be gonne with such armes they have', and 'Nor is there any faction at all amongst us, every one hitherto shewing himselfe a faithful souldier and a true Englishman.' Nonetheless he was still concerned that 'we have lately found the devill's endeavours to have his chapel amongst us' there being 'certain papists in our armie, to the number of one hundred and fifty' who were mainly from the Tower Regiment, which had provided some of the recruits for Buller's regiment. To counter this, Berkenhead continued, 'we are now purging ourselves' of them.[49]

And so, much to the relief of the island's population, the army was re-embarked on 29 March 1655 and sailed two days later heading in a northerly direction, leaving behind nothing in Barbados but a lot of bitterness and resentment. The small island of St. Vincent, described as being 'onely inhabited by infidells and canibells', was sighted the following day. On 2 April the fleet anchored off St. Lucia 'for councell, and giveinge orders'. Some of the men took the opportunity to go ashore but 'cold [*sic*] discover noe plantation or inhabitants, saveing wild and venomus creatures, in that craggy desart'. Then following the Caribbean winds north they passed Martinique on 3 April when, on board the *Bear*, an officer of Venables' own regiment, 'our gennerall eldest captaine Disney', died. The following day the fleet was becalmed off Dominica which one observer described as 'an infidell caniball nation, great enymes to our nation' and some of whose inhabitants, seeing the English vessels becalmed, paddled out 'in a cannoo comeinge (friendly counterfeits) nere the ship's side, darted some arrowes amongst our men, gazeinge and admireing their hardy insolency'. On 6 April in the morning they passed Montserrat, by midday they had cleared the English island of Nevis, and by two o'clock had reached St. Kitts (St. Christopher). This island had been jointly colonised by the English and the French and upon the sight of the fleet 'the French gave us a *bien venu* from all theire forts and gunnes, above 30 great shott for salutes'.[50] Here the St. Christopher regiment, along with Butler and Holdip who had been sent ahead in early February to recruit, were embarked. One commentator, noting the unusual number of camp followers that accompanied these islanders, remarked that the expedition had taken on the appearance of 'a people that went to inhabit some country already conquered, than to conquer: but for this, perhaps, they had too good a precedent'.[51] The fleet left St. Christopher that evening and on 8 April it was joined by two of the store ships, the *Adam and Eve* and the *Marigold*.[52] On 10 April a council of war was called when Venables informed his officers of their destination, Hispaniola, and brought to their attention the Lord Protector's prohibition against plundering.

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[47] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.11.

[48] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.7.

[49] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.158.

Nothing has been recorded as to the reaction of the army officers when they were made aware of the first objective of the expedition. Most likely the destination was of less interest to them than the opportunity it afforded for action, fame and hopefully plunder. Presumably at this meeting Venables explained his plan and allotted his officers the roles they were to play in it. At some point in this meeting Winslow informed both naval and army officers as to the Protector's wishes concerning the division of spoils. Cromwell had instructed that any pillage or plunder be handed over to the Commissioners 'so they may be brought to a just and true account for the publique advantage'. In essence, the Commissioners decreed that there was to be no indiscriminate plundering of the island and that all the spoils were to be collected by the State, upon pain of death, to cover their expenses and for 'rewards to deserving Persons', and the remainder was to be used 'to ease the burthens of our dear Native Country, for whose sake, next to the Glory of God, this design is undertaken'.[53]

The officers would have been thunderstruck. It had been common practice, from time in memorial, for armies to expect the right to pillage and plunder a defeated enemy. For the English soldiery fighting abroad to be deprived of this concession, which was seen as a well-deserved reward for their efforts, was unjust in the extreme, they surely retorted. Venables, who as a commissioner knew of Cromwell's prohibition as it was included in his instructions, nonetheless argued (at least he later said that he did) that this order would result in a loss of confidence in the officers. To bring the army 'from Pay and Plunder both (which they had in England) to have neither Pay nor Plunder, without the providing of some fit medium I thought was impossible'. The officers, many of whom were far in arrears already and who had come in search of riches, were forced to compromise and agree to six weeks' pay in lieu of plunder and that they would partition the spoils throughout each regiment 'according to every Mans quality and Merit'. This was, in fact, a fairer division than the indiscriminate plundering, because:

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[50] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.505.

[51] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, pp.378–379.

[52] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.505.

[53] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.15–17, 114; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.150.

> the Men that usually performed the Service ouf the day lye Slaine, wounded, or have the Enemy still before them, so that without iminent ruin they cannot seek after Spoil, but persons whose deserts merited little or nothing in the Service of the day carry away the profit of the whole success, to the singular discouragement of brave resolutions who usually get nothing but blows.[54]

However this compromise arrangement was far from satisfactory to Winslow who claimed that the Protector had given them the authority to deal with the spoils, but he seems to have accepted it. Cromwell's intent had been all along that the expedition would be able to pay for itself from the plunder that it was able to accumulate from its expected victories and so to prohibit indiscriminate plundering was logical, if deeply unpopular. However, given the likely sensitivities this would arouse within both the army and the fleet, it was never going to be an easy policy to implement. Venables was placed in an awkward situation for he was both a soldier and a commissioner. To side with Winslow (and presumably Butler as well) would disgruntle his fellow officers and enrage his soldiers, whilst to side with the army would alienate the other commissioners. He was left with no choice but to entreat the officers to accept six weeks' pay in lieu of pillage and to leave the collection of spoils to the commissioners, which in itself was not an unreasonable compromise although the soldiers would fail to see it that way. By this decision he was to lose much of their respect whilst understandably the soldiers felt cheated by the commissioners and deserted by their officers. Many had volunteered because of the lure of gold and silver, and, in fact, the officers openly declared that they should have plunder to encourage them. The action of the commissioners was deplorable at such a stage. To publicise this now, on the eve of the attack, showed poor judgement and a lack of empathy on behalf of the commissioners with the soldiers. No doubt the timing of the announcement had been considered and that on balance it was thought better to tell the army when it was about to go into action, when they had no alternative, rather than tell them in Barbados and run the risk of an all-out mutiny. Given the harsh conditions of soldiering during the seventeenth century, the knowledge that plunder was the reward for victory did much to encourage the common soldier when they were habitually short of food and pay, but to decree no plunder at all, particularly in a foreign country, was a heartless act and one that was to have a demoralising effect on the soldiers once they were informed about the decree.[55] This episode certainly highlights the overinflated confidence of the English, for to argue on the eve of a campaign about the division of the expected spoils shows how obsessed many of the English were for their personal gain, and as one observer wrote, 'Now when we should haue bin ascking the lord to giue us this place: wee insted of that ware asharing the skin before wee had Cached the foxx.'[56] Another eyewitness went further in his condemnation of the attitude of the English when he later wrote 'Nothing busied their minds and thoughts more, than the riches of the place. Their talk was all of the money, plate, and gallant plunder, they were like to have ... Thus may be seen the avaricious intents of some ... who desire rather to heap up to themselves abundance of treasure ... than to glorify God in their actions.'[57] This overconfidence was soon to be checked, for on the following day, 11 April 1655, the coast of Hispaniola was sighted.[58]

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[54] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.15.

[55] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.17–18; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.150.

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[56] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.150.

[57] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.379.

[58] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.149.

Part 2

7

The Landing

Exactly when, and why, Venables chose Hispaniola as his first target to attack is uncertain. Cromwell, in his instructions to the commissioners, left the choice of where to attack to them, and undoubtedly it would have become a point of much discussion between them. None of the extant sources provide an explanation as to why the islands were attacked first, which was Gage's recommendation, rather than attempting the mainland, which was Modyford's. Given that the objective was to seize Spanish territory in general but Spanish wealth in particular, Hispaniola seemed like a logical starting point. The English knew the wealth of the Spanish Empire was to be found on the mainland, especially in what is now Central America, and not on the islands, but before an attempt on the continent could be made the English needed to secure a base on a strategically located island from which to operate. Barbados was impractical for many reasons, principally given its location on the periphery of the Caribbean whilst the other English islands were too small. Venables needed an island that was centrally located, astride the sea lanes used by the Spanish and that had favourable winds, allowing easy passage to and from his ships. The island needed to be large enough to accommodate his army and with the capacity to feed it and provide a surplus to provision the expeditions that would be sent against the mainland. Hispaniola had served this very purpose for the Spaniards when they used it to launch the conquest of the mainland in the early sixteenth century. Since then it had developed into an established administrative centre from where most of the Caribbean islands were governed. With the exception of Santiago de Cuba, on the southern side of Cuba, none of the other Spanish islands would provide the same advantages that Hispaniola did, and so it was probably quite a simple choice to make once it had been decided to secure an island base prior to attacking the mainland. It is possible that the decision to secure an island first, and that Hispaniola was to be selected as the target, was made before the fleet left England (it had been rumoured during the summer of 1654 that this was the destination of the expedition), but certainly before it arrived in Barbados. Virtually as soon as the expedition arrived in the West Indies, Butler and Holdip were sent to St. Christopher to recruit men with instructions to remain there until the rest of the fleet arrived. Given its location it would seem that it was Venables' intention, as early as

February 1655, to collect these new recruits and continue with the favourable winds from St. Christopher to Hispaniola. However Butler was to later advise Cromwell that no decision as to where the expedition would attack first had been made when he left Barbados, but he might well have just have been kept in the dark by Venables.[1] When Venables departed Barbados he left instructions for the missing shipping to proceed to Hispaniola, so it would seem it had always been his objective. Furthermore, given that Thomas Gage had been appointed chaplain to Venables' own regiment, it would seem probable that Venables would have had ample opportunity to discuss with Gage his options on the voyage from England, and so if the decision to attack Hispaniola had not been made before leaving England, Gage would have had plenty of opportunity to convince Venables of its merits whilst at sea.

Known as *La Espanola* by the Spaniards, Hispaniola is the second largest island in the Greater Antilles. Little known as Hispaniola was to the English, the island was ideally located to disrupt the communications of the Spanish American Empire and Spain. Few Englishmen had previously set foot upon her golden shoreline. Captain William Jackson had sought refuge and provisions there only a few years previously, whilst Sir Francis Drake had held the island to ransom in 1586 but the English really knew very little about the place. First settled by the Spanish in 1492, it was their oldest possession in the New World. Described by one English commentator as 'fruitfull' and 'pleasant' Hispaniola was sparsely populated. Far from the sought-after mountains of gold and silver there was instead an abundance of cattle, 'beeves' and hogs 'soe that you cannot goe many stepps from the sight of some of them'. In addition to these animals the island was endowed with a multitude of goats, sheep, many varieties of parrot, as well as 'delicate fowle', suitable for food or pleasure. The country was densely wooded, as the English were to find to their cost, thus lending itself easily to ambushes. The forest was intermittently broken up by the numerous 'sevannos', plains covered by grass 'not broad leaved and ranke as in the Barbados, but small and sweet like unto the English grasse'. In more peaceful times it was common to see the famed 'cow killers', expert hunters consisting of freed slaves, and 'Vagabons that are saved from the gallowes in Spaine', who stalked the innumerable cattle that grazed throughout the island using their short lances with devastating effect, but 'they kill for their [the cattle] hydes and tallow sake only, leaving the flesh to be devoured'. These hunters were to find new game once the English had landed.[2] The island's economy consisted of the export of these hides, tobacco, 'coccolate', but primarily sugar, to Spain. The English, it will be noted, encountered and sacked many a sugar mill upon their march to San Domingo, which were also a source of fresh water for them. The original inhabitants of the island, the Taino, had been virtually eradicated by their Imperial overlords, and so by the middle of the seventeenth century the mills were farmed mainly by enslaved Africans.[3]

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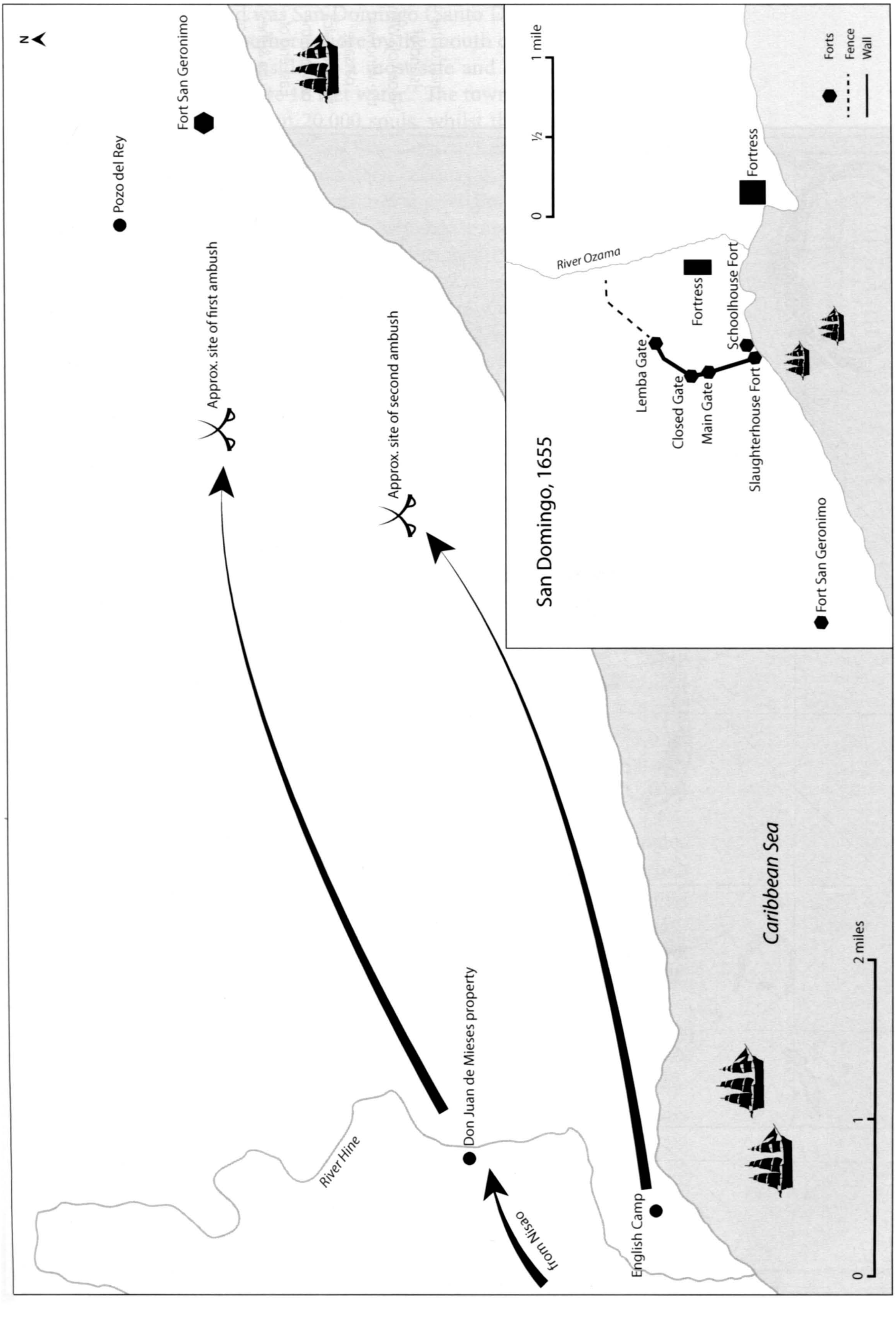
[1] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.754.

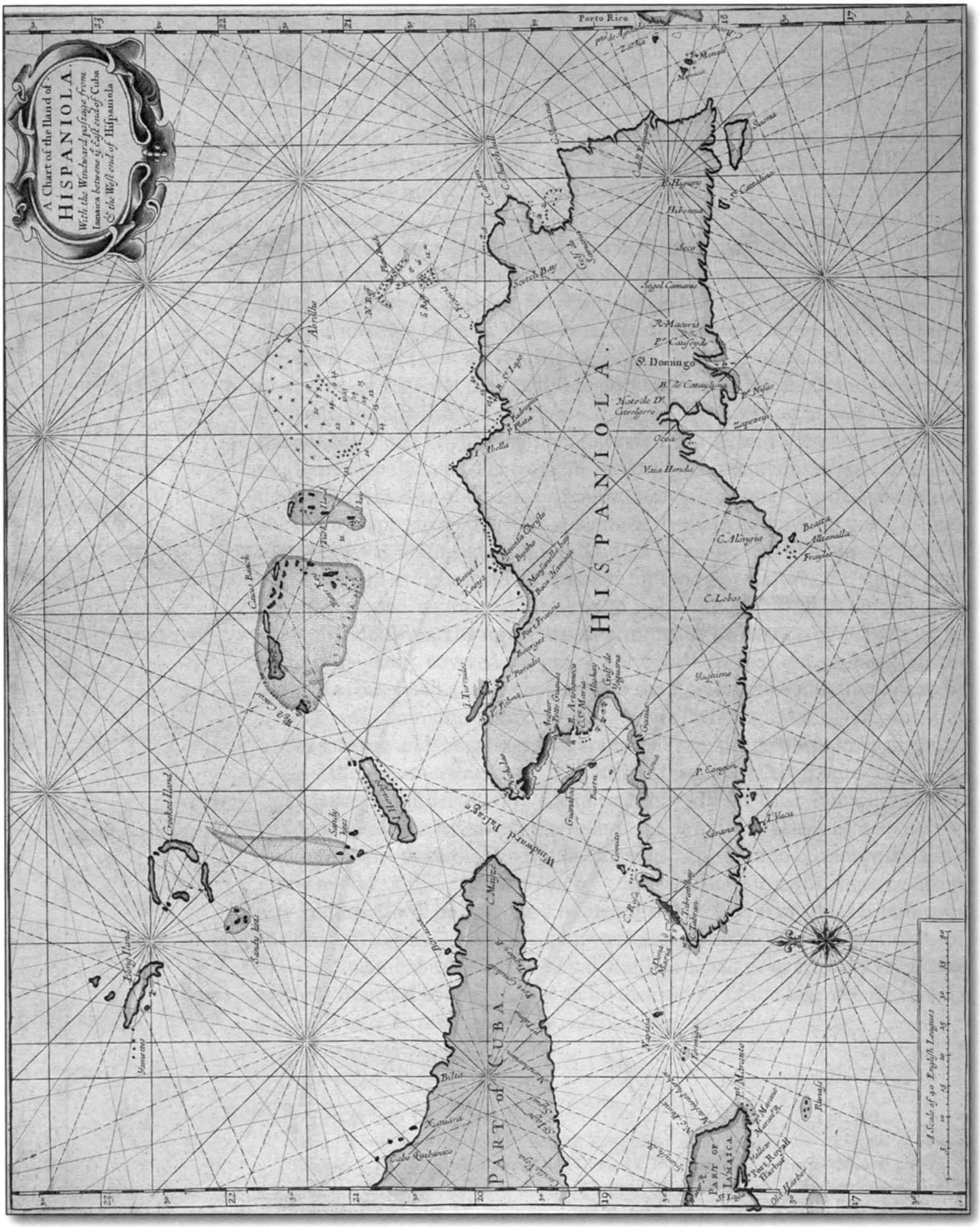
[2] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.127; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.156.

[3] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.135.


N
Fort San Geronimo
Pozo del Rey
Approx. site of first ambush
Approx. site of second ambush
Don Juan de Mieses property
River Hine
from Nisao
English Camp
Caribbean Sea
0
1
2 miles
San Domingo, 1655
0
½
1 mile
River Ozama
Fortress
Fortress
Schoolhouse Fort
Lemba Gate
Closed Gate
Main Gate
Slaughterhouse Fort
Fort San Geronimo
Forts
Fence
Wall

Map 3 English attack on Hispaniola, April–May 1655.

Chart of the Island of Hispaniola With the Windward passage from Jamaica between the East end of Cuba & the West end of Hispaniola, c.1680. John Thornton. (The Huntingdon Library, Art Museum and Botanical Gardens, California, 093:782 M) See colour plate D.


A Chart of the Iland of
HISPANIOLA
With the Windward passage from
Jamaica betwene ye East end of Cuba
& the West end of Hispaniola
Porto Rico
Mona
Saona
C. Samana
Scotch Bay
Abreillo
S. Domingo
HISPANIOLA
Ocea
Vaca Honda
Beatta
Frayles
C. Lobos
Yaquimo
P. Conpon
I. Vaca
Savana
C. Tiburon
Windward Passage
C. Maysi
Crooked Iland
Long Iland
Sandy keys
PART of CUBA
PART OF JAMAICA
Port Royall Harbour
Old Harbor
Pt. Morante
St. Iago
A Scale of 40 English Leagues

The capital of the island was San Domingo (Santo Domingo in Spanish) which was situated on its southern shore by the mouth of a river bearing the same name, at what was considered 'a most safe and convenient harbour for shipping not drawing above 16 feet water'.[4] The town's population would have numbered little more than 20,000 souls, whilst the island as a whole perhaps amounted to as many again. San Domingo was the centre of the island's export trade and naturally was the most heavily defended location. It was noted that there were '11 or 12 churches and religious houses' in the city, including a cathedral and two convents, 'which seemed to be stately stone and bricke buildings, these shadowing the other northern buildings of the towne, which wee compute to be four square and 2 miles about at least'.[5]

As the Spanish Empire in America steadily grew during the sixteenth century, an administrative mechanism was required to manage these vast new possessions. In 1524 the *Real y Supremo Consejo de las Indias* was established, in Seville, to oversee this empire on behalf of the King. Known in English as the Council of the Indies, it acted as the conduit between the colonies and the Imperial Government and oversaw all aspects of colonial activity and governance both in the Americas and the Spanish possessions in the Philippines. The archives of the Council, known as *Archivo General de Indias*, are today located in Seville and contain a vast and fascinating historical record of Spanish activities in the Americas since 1492, including informative documents relating to the Anglo-Spanish War. The Spanish domains in the Americas were subdivided into a number of viceroyalties under the rule of a viceroy, appointed by the King through the Council and then further into more manageable *Real Audiencia*, which covered a group of territories providing consultative, administration, judicial and limited legislative functions to those colonies. The first *Audiencia* in the New World was established in San Domingo in 1511 and had governance authority over all the islands of the Caribbean and parts of the mainland. Hispaniola was, therefore, already both a major administrative and logistics hub for the West Indies and so an obvious target for the English.

The first engagement between the English and the Spanish of the Anglo-Spanish War occurred at sea during the first few days of April 1655 when the *Martin*, which had evidently been sent ahead with a mission of 'coasting the main' to obtain intelligence, had encountered and was 'set upon by two Spanish ships, of 400 men in both. She, after three hours and a half fight with them, and with the loss of one man got away.'[6] The *Martin*, carried by the tide, arrived off San Domingo on the afternoon of 15 April and brought the news to Penn of its encounter with the Spaniards. These were the first shots in a war that was to rage in both Europe and the Caribbean until 1660 but which only formally ended with the Treaty of Madrid in 1670.

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[4] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.135.

[5] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.136.

[6] Penn, *Memorials*, p.82.

As the English fleet approached the city of San Domingo on 13 April from the east they noticed that the shoreline was 'low and very even, without hills, but rocky, and a great surf of the sea against it'. The coastline then opened up into a bay which 'we guessed to be about 8 or 10 leagues over, from point to point' on which the city itself was situated. To the east of the city was 'a river which comes down a great way out of the country' and which is today known as the River Ozama, but then simply as the *Rio Santo Domingo*.[7] The Spanish inhabitants of San Domingo must have gazed in disbelief when, about midday on 13 April 1655, an English fleet consisting of '56 sails' cruised into sight off their port side.[8] For many months it had been rumoured that the English Protectorate was planning to attack Spanish possessions in America, and the arrival of Don Bernardino de Meneses Bracamonte y Zapata, Count de Penalva – the newly appointed royal *audiencia*, governor and captain general of all the islands forces – with a sizeable reinforcement at the end of March, had done little to allay or dispel these fears.[9] Nevertheless, the thought of immediate attack must have had not a few Spaniards frightened for both their lives and their property, for the events of Drake's raid 66 years earlier were still within living memory for some of the inhabitants. The Spanish were acutely aware of the strategic importance of Hispaniola and the effect its loss would have upon their empire in the Americas. De Penalva believed it to be 'the key to all the Indies, and the protection of armadas and fleets. If he [Cromwell] took La Espanola, this usurper would be complete master.'[10] King Philip knew this; de Penalva knew this, and the English knew this. It is for this reason that the English chose to attack Hispaniola first and why de Penalva was determined to defend it at all costs.

Other than a safe harbour San Domingo also boasted some extensive defences. As the city had been easily captured by Drake in 1586, the famous Italian engineer Bautista Antoneli had visited Hispaniola in 1589 and drew up plans to strengthen the city's defences on the western side where a ditch and parapet were to be erected, but a lack of money saw little improvements made before 1655.[11] One English witness commented that 'The towne is walled to the westward, hath the river to the eastward, the sea to the southward: but to the northward it hath onely a lime hedge growing thick about it.'[12] On the coast and to the west of the city was Slaughterhouse Fort, connected by a breastwork to Schoolhouse Fort, to its rear. Travelling north from the former emplacement was the Main Gate, which was temporarily

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[7] Penn, *Memorials*, p.81.

[8] Count de Penalva, 'Count Penalva's Report to Secretary Leguia', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives of the English Attack on Santo Domingo 1655* (London: Camden Society, 1926, Vol. XIV), p.48.

[9] Count de Penalva, 'Count Penalva's Report to Secretary Leguia', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.48.

[10] Count de Penalva, 'Count Penalva's Report to Secretary Leguia', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.48.

[11] Ray F. Broussard, 'Bautista Antonelli: Architect of Caribbean Defense', *The Historian*, Vol. 50, no. 4, 1988, pp.513–514; AGI, *Plano de la ciudad de Santo Domingo (República Dominicana)*, 1608, SANTO_DOMINGO, 22.

[12] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.135.

blocked up during the attack. Another connecting wall led farther north to the Closed Gate, the city's largest entrance. From this spot the wall curved gradually eastward towards the Lenba Gate. From this point onwards back to the *Rio Santo Domingo* the city had no wall at all but just a thick hedge, though soon after the English withdrawal the fortifications were extended to the river's edge. Some way in front of Slaughterhouse Fort was the fort known as San Geronimo, it being 'a plain brick wall, triangular, and without flankers, yet was it furnished with nine pieces of good ordnance, and about three-hundred desperate fellows to manage them'.
the key to the defences on the western side of the city, the most probable direction of attack upon the city. Built about one mile in front of the main city wall it overlooked both the nearest practical landing place to the city, being the mouth of the River Hine to the west but also the road that led to the entrances into the city from the west. Seemingly the only part of Antoneli's extension that was actually constructed, it was positioned well and could enfilade fire upon any attack along the western wall or on the road from the River Hine, whilst it could also fire upon any shipping in the bay off either the River Hine or close by the city that was supporting a landing. It was described as 'a stone fort' which was 'in force and bignesse much like the one of the lesser castles in the Downes onely the middle was squaire built. I could not perceive that there was above 10 or 12 gunns at most in it.'[13] Venables later reported that the fort was small, only 'twenty five Yards Square, and seven or Eight Yards high at least'.[14] Its exact location is now unknown but was most likely somewhere in the modern San Domingo suburb now known as San Geronimo, probably between Avenue George Washington and Avenue Simon Bolivar 'close adjoyning to the sea'.[15] All these defences were manned by detachments of the city garrison. It is amusing to note that to the north where there were no permanent fortifications, a trench had been dug; a section of which, near a hill at a point known locally as *Tres Cruces* was commanded by Captain de Carvajal, who was aided by the wife of Don Juan Rosado 'on duty, arms in hand ... in man's attire.'[16]

The western bank of *Rio Santo Domingo* was similarly well defended. The circuit of defences ran south along the river incorporating the docks and Fort Sant Alberto, which protruded into the river. Further south was the principle fortress, completely walled and protecting the river mouth. From here more walls continued along the coast to the south of the city and back to the Schoolhouse Fort, thus completing the city's defences. On the opposite bank of the river facing the city was the Royal Fortress, containing 32 pieces of ordnance and 'most important to the defence of the city and island'. Within the city itself, once the English had landed, earthworks were erected at the top of each street and these in turn were covered by newly sited ordnance.

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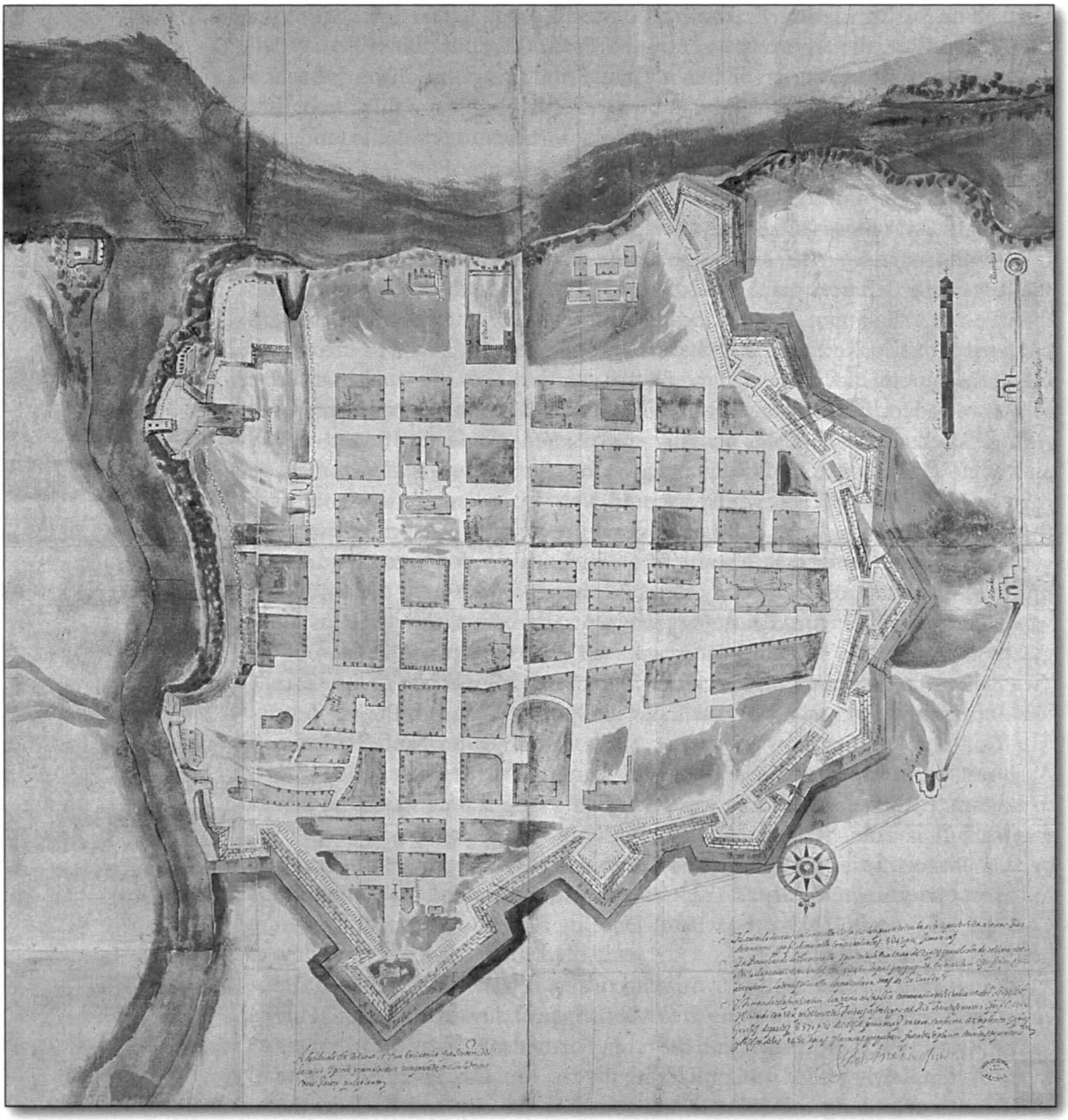
[13] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.55.

[14] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.95.

[15] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.55.

[16] Manuel Gonzalez Tinoco Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', *Spanish Narratives of the English Attack on Santo Domingo 1655* (London: Camden Society, 1926, Vol. XIV), p.37.



Plano de la ciudad de Santo Domingo (República Dominicana) *c.*1608, Anon. (Archivo General de Indias MP-SANTO-DOMINGO, 22) See colour plate E.

In all, the English believed there to be 100 pieces of artillery in and around San Domingo.[17]

A collection of maps amongst the *Archivo General de Indias* in Seville provides a fascinating glimpse at the layout of the city and of the terrain over which the English attack of 1655 took place. The first, dated 3 April 1656, was prepared by the Count de Penalva just after the English attack and shows the defences of San Domingo including additions he added after the attack, but it also shows in some detail the terrain to the west of the city, through which the English advanced and where the fighting took place. Unfortunately it does not pinpoint the exact location where the engagements occurred but this map, in conjunction with other sources, can be used to identify the general vicinity of the fighting. De Penalva's map, in three sections, lacks a scale, and compared to the other maps in the collection is poorly drawn, but is nonetheless useful. It shows the road from Nisao, where the English landed, to the River Hine and the various roads along either side of it, as well as the fords used by the English to cross the River Hine. It also locates some of the Spanish properties, and other features, that played a role in the campaign and which are marked by letters and a description of them is provided, in Spanish. The names and location of the various components of the city defences are marked on the map as well, and these are numbered, along with important buildings within the city. A description of these, also in Spanish, is also included on the map.[18]

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[17] Irene Aloha Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives of the English Attack on Santo Domingo 1655* (London: Camden Society, Vol.XIV, 1926), Appendix C, pp.74–75; Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.136.

Two other maps, both dated 1679, provide detail of the defences from that time, of the River Hine and the terrain from there to the city walls, including the fort of San Geronimo. Though these were produced more than a quarter of century after the attack it is evident that little had changed on the ground when compared against de Penalva's map, and thus they provide a graphic illustration of the area through which the English struggled and fought.[19] A fourth map, dated 1681, shows the proposed extension of the city defences with the extent of the city walls at that date, being very much the same as they were in 1655. Whilst of less historical value in discussing the events of 1655 than the previous three maps, it is nonetheless a fascinating document.[20] Another relevant image of San Domingo can be found in Walter Brigge's 1589 book *A summarie and true discourse of Sir Frances Drakes West Indian voyage...*, engraved by Giovanni Battista Boazio. Whilst predating this English attack by 66 years it provides an excellent small-scale map of the city and vicinity, little of which had changed in the intervening years, and helps visualise the location and especially shows why the English could only attempt a landing at the River Hine and not closer to the city or even to the east of the River San Domingo.[21]

From these maps the topography over which the fighting was to take place can be reconstructed. Nisao, where the main body of the English landed, is around 26 miles/42 kilometres from the centre of San Domingo as the crow flies. Between the city and Nisao was the broad River Hine (*Rio Jayna*) which is situated approximately 18 miles/29 kilometres from Nisao in a direct line,

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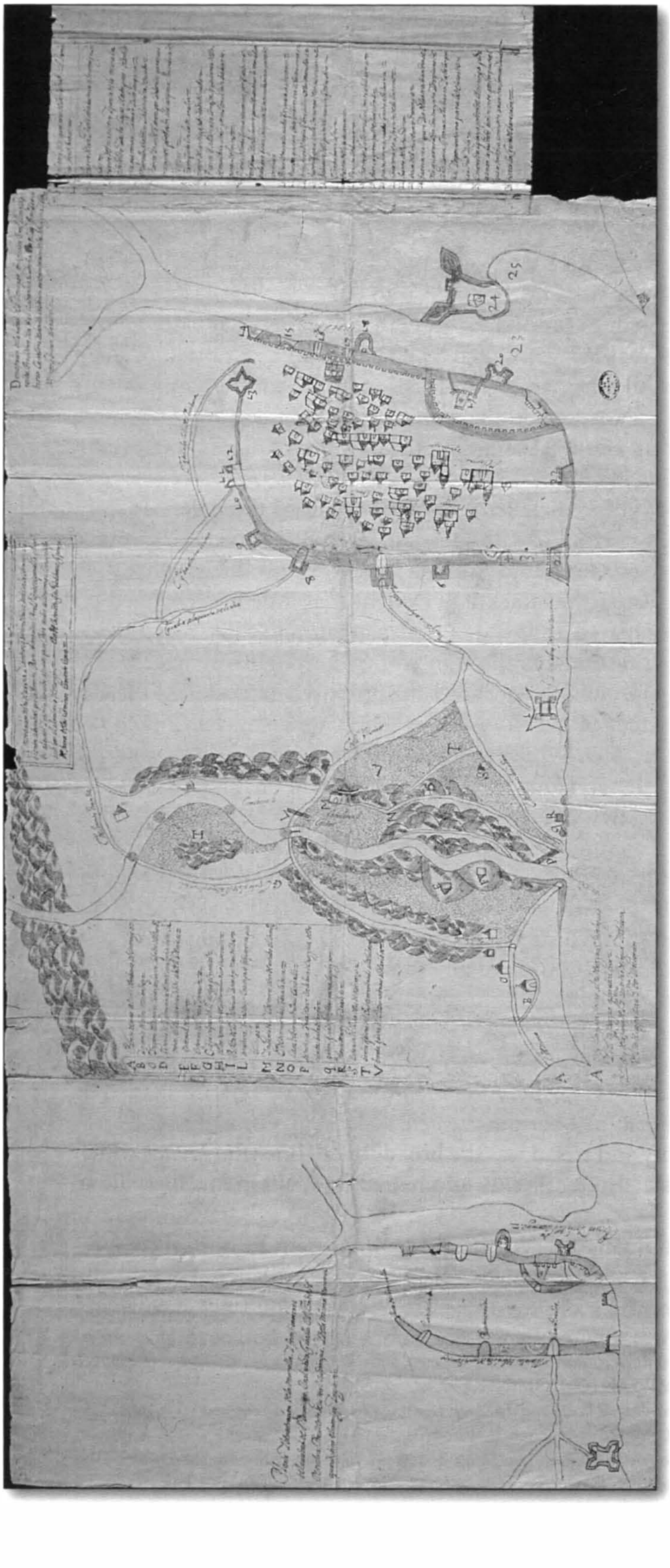
[18] AGI, *Plano de la ciudad de Santo Domingo y sus alrededores (República Dominicana)*, c.1656, MP-SANTO_DOMINGO, 52. A translation with notes of this map is provided in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, Appendix C, pp.73–76.

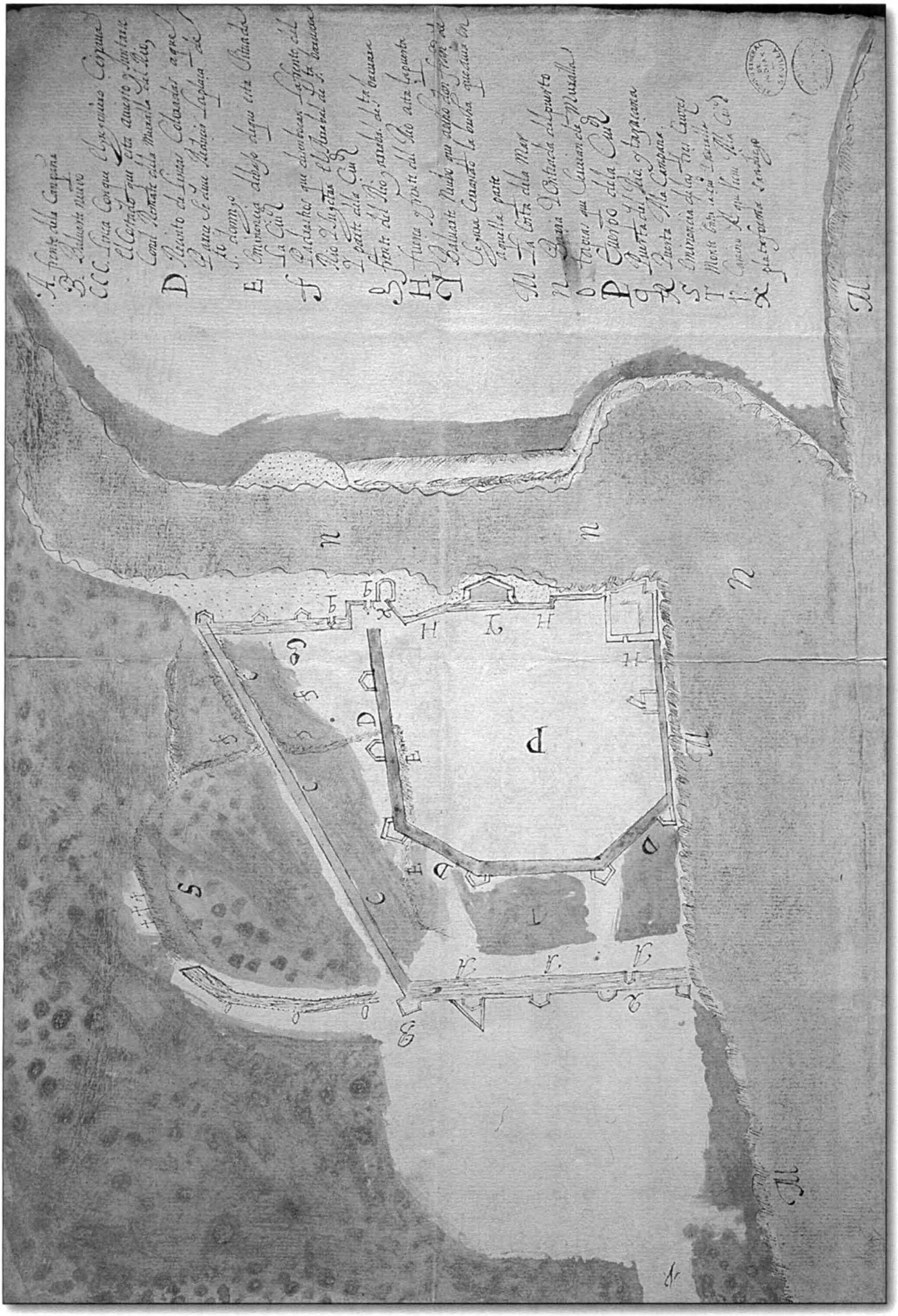
[19] AGI, *Plano del campo de la ciudad de Santo Domingo, entre la muralla y el río Haina (República dominicana)*, 1679, MP-SANTO_DOMINGO, 77.

[20] AGI, *Plano de las murallas de la ciudad de Santo Domingo (República Dominicana)*, c.1681, MP-SANTO_DOMINGO, 76.

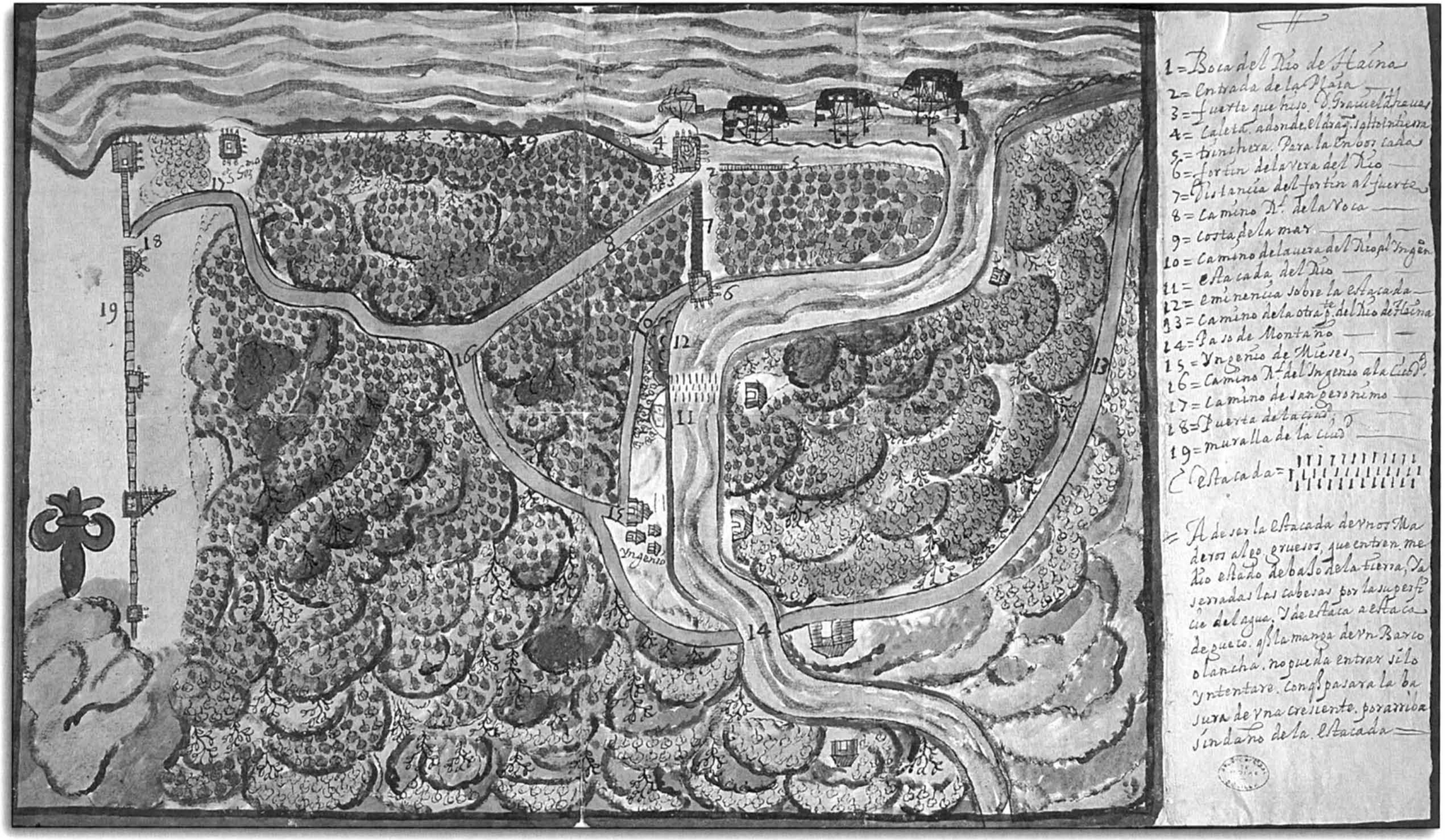
[21] Giovanni Battista Boazio, *San Domingo [Map and views illustrating Sir Francis Drake's West Indian voyage, 1585–6]*, 1589.



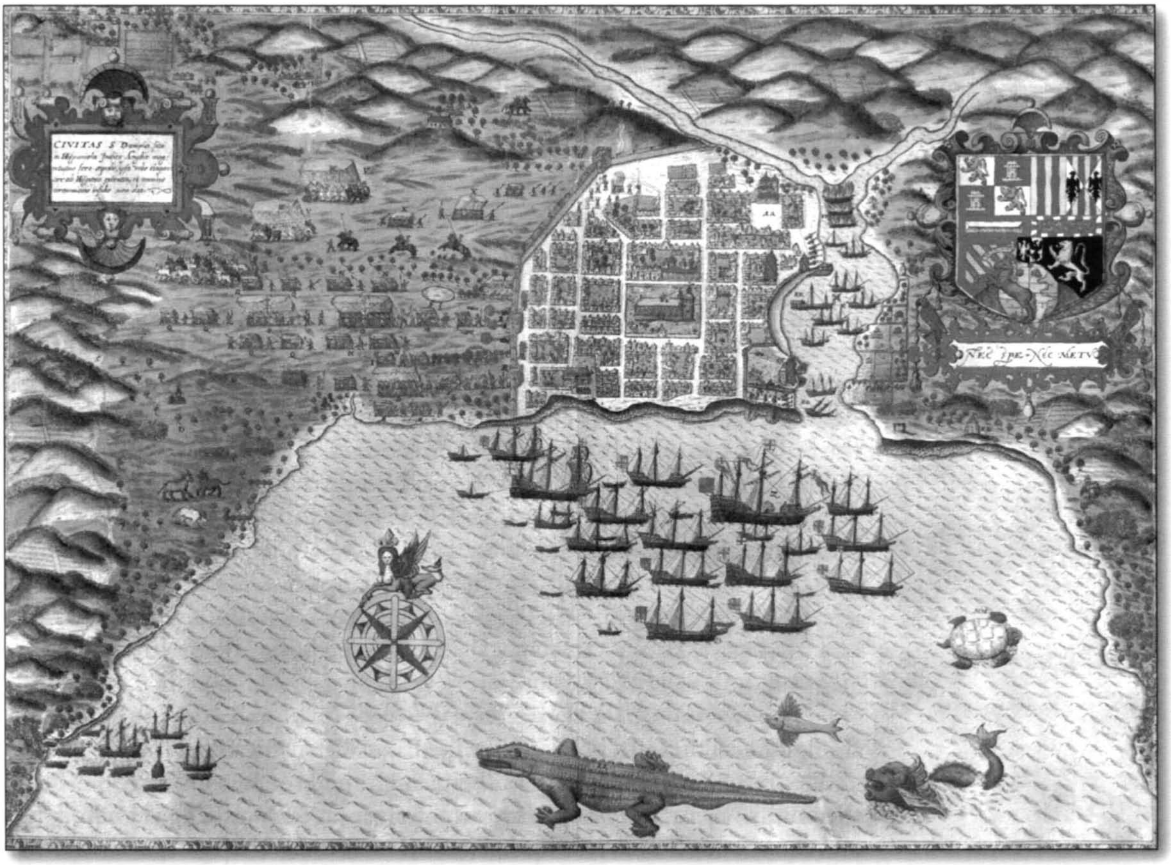
Plano de la ciudad de Santo Domingo y sus alrededores (República Dominicana) c.1656. Francisco Vicente Duran. (Archivo General de Indias. MP-SANTO-DOMINGO, 52) See colour plate F.1.
(Referred to in text as de Penalva's map)



Plano del campo de la ciudad de Santo Domingo, entre la muralla y el río Haina (República dominicana) c.1679. Anon. (Archivo General de Indias, MP-SANTO-DOMINGO, 77) See colour plate F.2.


1 = Boca del Rio de Haina
2 = Entrada de la Plaia
3 = fuerte que hizo D. Gravel [illegible]
4 = Caleta adonde el [illegible]
5 = trinchera. Para la Enboscada
6 = fortin dela vera del Rio
7 = Distancia del fortin al fuerte
8 = Camino Rl. de la Voca
9 = costa de la mar
10 = Camino dela vera del Rio al Yngenio
11 = estacada del Rio
12 = eminencia sobre la estacada
13 = Camino dela otra pte. del Rio de Haina
14 = Paso de Montaño
15 = Yngenio de Mieses
16 = Camino Rl. del Yngenio ala Ciud.
17 = Camino de san geronimo
18 = Puerta dela ciud.
19 = muralla de la ciud.
Estacada =
A de ser la estacada de vnos Maderos algo gruesos, que entren medio estado debaxo dela tierra, y serradas las cabesas por la superficie del agua, y de estaca a estaca de hueco, q la manga de vn Barco o lancha, no pueda entrar si lo yntentare. con q pasara la basura de vna cresiente, por arriba sin daño dela estacada
Yngenio
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19

Plano del campo de la ciudad de Santo Domingo, entre la muralla y el río Haina (República dominicana) c.1679. Anon. (Archivo General de Indias, MP-SANTO-DOMINGO, 77) See colour plate G.1.



Map and views illustrating Sir Francis Drake's West Indian voyage, 1585–6 (San Domingo), c.1589. Baptista Boazio. (The Library of Congress, Washington DC, G3291.S12 s000 .B6) See colour plate G.2.

but considerably farther along the windy coastal road. Along this road were at least two sugar mills one of which contained a small chapel. At a now indeterminable point just to the west of the River Hine this road splits at Don Pedro Nieto's farm, with a small track running in a general easterly direction towards the mouth of the River Hine (*Boca de Jayna*). The main track headed north, referred to as the Balsiquillo road on the de Penalva map, through thick woods and scrub with hills either side of it, running parallel to the river but some distance from it, towards a ford located on the property belonging to Don Juan de Mieses, whose plantation straddled both banks of the river. Between this northerly section of the road and the river were farms belonging to Don Francisco Garabito (the more southerly of the two) and that belonging to Don Francisco de Tapia. The ford at de Mieses' sugar mill is about two miles/three kilometres along the western bank of the river from its mouth, but would have been further than this along the road.

Just in front of de Mieses' ford the road bends east toward the city, and at this point it forks once again. The left fork continues north towards Don Rodrigo Pimental's property where another ford across the river was located, the river having meandered in a wide bend from de Mieses' ford before meeting this road. The land between this road and the two fords is described on de Penalva's map as belonging to some free African-Caribbeans. Once this northerly section of the road crossed the river it became known as the

Monte Grande Road which then curved around the hilly forest to the north-west to the city and then bore south to a point immediately north of the city walls. Here it split into two roads, one entering the city at the Lenba Gate and the other entering the city in the vicinity of *Tres Cruces*, over the hill here and across the thick hedge that formed the city's northern defences. Just before *Tres Cruces* this road forked once again, with the other track entering the city close to the *Rio Santo Domingo* at Santa Barbara.

The western gates of the city were accessed by the road that had crossed de Mieses' ford and which was called the Esperilla road. This road continued through the dense woods and somewhere in the vicinity of the current sports complex, south of the Expresso John F. Kennedy, it split with the right track heading south towards the mouth of the River Hine, which was called the Boca de Jayna road. Just beyond this split, and towards the city walls, was the feature known to the Spanish as the *Pozo del Rey* (the King's Well) which contained both a farm (with a well) and a small earthwork, though when this was constructed is not clear. From the *Pozo del Rey* the track split again, with the southern branch leading directly to Fort San Geronimo and the main track leading the Closed Gate in the city wall. It seems likely that from a point just about where the Esperilla and de Jayna roads split the land was open scrub, where anybody traversing the road could be easily seen from both the city walls and from San Geronimo.

The terrain on the east back of the River Hine forms a rough equilateral triangle, with the apex being where the Esperilla and de Jayna roads converge and each road being the edge of the triangle, and the two lower vertex being the points where the two roads meet the river (at de Mieses' ford to the north and the mouth if the river to the south). Inside this triangle the terrain was thickly wooded, hilly and with numerous small trails traversing it which, according to de Penalva's map, went in a general north to south direction. On the north edge of the triangle was the sugar mill belonging to Juan de Mieses, whilst on the southern edge was situated that of Don Andreas Medrano. The terrain on the west bank of the River Hine forms a rough half oval, with the river being the baseline and the curve starting at de Mieses' ford in the north curving along the Balsiquillo road to the mouth of the river in the south. The terrain within the curve is also thickly forested and hilly. It was within these two irregular shapes that the majority of the fighting between the English and the Spanish was to take place.

Upon the arrival of de Penalva in San Domingo only a few weeks before, the governor noted that of the 300 men who comprised the city's garrison only 170 were fit to take up arms. To these a further 200 harquebusiers brought from Spain by himself were added to the garrison.[22] In addition the city had an unknown number of militia who were immediately assembled. All able-bodied men were instructed to report for military service, as were all slaves from the outlying regions. After the English had been defeated it was ordered that the 300 lancers ('cow killers') of the garrison be issued with 6,000 pesos for their expenses. The cow killers, as both English and Spanish sources confirm, lived throughout the forests on the small farmsteads or mills near to the open plains. As hunters they were not part of the formal defence force of the island but constituted an irregular soldiery who could be called upon to defend the island when required, and certainly were involved during the English attack. Captain Pallano, who wrote the main Spanish narrative of the English attack, recorded that the garrison comprised both militia and regular companies and that the militia were mustered when the warning beacons were fired.[23] The Count further increased his garrison by forming a small company of volunteers from the passengers of *La Concepcion*, the vessel which had so recently brought him over from Spain and he noted that 'This vessel brought presentable people and they rose to their obligations.'[24] Furthermore the citizens of San Domingo themselves were issued with 300 firelocks and 600 lances from the garrison magazine to boost the defenders, whilst the populace were encouraged 'to give arms to those who had none'.[25] Spanish sources give the impression of a city in arms, where most of the male adult population were armed and prepared to fight. The regular garrison was supplemented by the militia and volunteers, who manned the walls and who dug the trenches, all to 'relieve the common mother' and neither 'did the rank and file ask pay'.[26]

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[22] Count de Penalva, 'Count Penalva's Report to Secretary Leguia', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, pp.47–48.

As the campaign wore on the garrison was able to call upon additional troops that came in from the hinterland of the island. One hundred soldiers came from Santiago de los Caballeros in the north, more from the San Juan valley in the west, others arrived from Guaba and La Vega also in the north – perhaps as many as 400 additional men in total.[27] At the conclusion of this brief campaign the Spanish could muster perhaps 1,500 men for the defence of San Domingo. The quality of these troops is questionable, however. The cow killers were expert with their lances, and perhaps de Penalva's Spanish harquebusiers had seen recent action in Europe. The garrison forces proper comprised second-rate soldiery, and one might be forgiven to think of them as an undisciplined, poorly trained assortment, but, nevertheless, they were to prove more than a match for the English soldiers. The Spanish sources frequently make reference to orders being issued prohibiting the Spanish soldiery from withdrawing from the city without orders and so perhaps their discipline was questionable, whilst there were also numerous comments that suggest even the Spanish thought the calibre of some of their forces to be suspect. When the English fleet appeared before San Domingo the Spanish forces in the city must have amounted to approximately 800 men. As the invaders landed, a force of 300 men were immediately dispatched towards the River Hine in an attempt to ascertain the English intentions and to halt any march upon the city, with more dispatched later.[28]

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[23] Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, pp.ix, 1 post.

[24] Count de Penalva, 'Count Penalva's Report to Secretary Leguia', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.48.

[25] Diego de Soria Pardo, 'The Treasurer's Report', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives of the English Attack on Santo Domingo 1655* (London: Camden Society, 1926, Vol. XIV), p.63.

[26] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*,pp.37–38.

[27] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.19.

[28] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), Spanish Narratives, in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.4 and footnote 48.

On board this powerful English fleet confidence was high, too high perhaps, whilst disunity between the land and sea forces, as well between the Commissioners themselves, was starting to surface. At the Council of War held on board the *Swiftsure* on 10 April it had been decided to land the bulk of the army at the mouth of the River Hine and to march on the city from there, as Drake had done in 1585. Venables had initially proposed 'to run the Fleet into the Harbour of Domingo'[29] and thus effect a landing under the protection of Penn's seaborne artillery, and he was supported by Colonel Holdip in this, however both Penn and his officers protested at this plan, claiming that a boom or chain had been laid across the harbour entrance to forestall just such an manoeuvre. Penn had no proof that a boom had in fact been laid but it was prudent not to risk such an attempt until he had the chance to sound the depth of the water before the city. Given the lack of readiness of the Spanish defenders (by their own admission) such a brazen frontal attack might well have succeeded, but with limited landing options it was always going to be a risky endeavour. Despite the rift that was beginning to appear between the two it is perhaps too cynical to suggest that Penn's rejection of Venables' plan was based on the fear that the army would capture San Domingo and subsequently refuse to share out the spoils with the fleet. If this were the case, it was short-sighted jealousy and detrimental to the expedition's success.[30] Interestingly another witness, the auditor general of the Army John Daniell, put the blame on Winslow for refusing to let the army attack San Domingo directly. Obviously no admirer of Winslow, Daniell wrote from Jamaica in May, 'One regiment of seamen joyned with us our best counsells to run into the harbour and towne off St. Domingo suddenly before knowledge of our approach … but mr. Winsloe (who would not be contradicted) feringe any to have spoile save himselfe, pretendinge all for publick treasure, would not suffer itt.'[31]

Therefore it was agreed that Venables would land on the River Hine, to the west of the city, with the main army and from here march on the island's capital, whilst a smaller force would attempt a second landing east of San Domingo and act as a distraction. How Venables intended to proceed once he arrived at the city walls was not recorded. It was reported by some of the guides picked up on St. Christopher that the mouth of the River Hine was guarded by 'a Fort and a Trench' and so it was expected that the landing would be contested. The Council of War decided that lots would be cast to see 'who shall land first' and that 'the ships in which each Regiment is transported be ordered to Sail very near in company, for the better ordering the several Regiments at landing'. The Council further resolved that if the 'Surge of the Sea go high, and the Fort and Trench be defended, that the Army land to the Leeward behind the second point [i.e. the trench]'. Those regiments landing with Venables were instructed that if the fort and trench were 'defended and within Shot' they were 'to advance against the Enemy, and to pass the same'. However, if 'it be out of Shot and not defended, then to stand still till all be landed'. If the army encountered no opposition at all at the landing then none of the regiments were to leave the landing area until all were ashore. All English soldiers were to wear 'a piece of white Cloth or Paper upon their left Arm' and their password was to be, appropriately enough, 'Religion'. It was also decided by lots being drawn, that the diversionary force to be landed to the east of the city was to consist of Colonel Buller's regiment with part of Holdip's.[32]

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[29] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.18.

[30] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.18.

[31] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.505.

The fleet arrived off the island Hispaniola during the morning 12 April, 'this being the obect [*sic*] our Eies have soe long disired to see', as Whistler noted in his journal, though it remained out of sight whilst final preparations for the landing were completed.[33] San Domingo's warning beacons were fired when the fleet was first spotted the next day around noon,[34] giving the rest of the island warning of an enemy presence. Within the city itself the Governor had the drums beaten to muster the garrison and to summon the militia forces. Undoubtedly the Spanish, at this early stage, would have assumed this was an English force, but as to their true intentions they would have been unaware. After a brief exchange of shots between the fleet and the garrison gunners the English vessels divided. The squadrons of Goodsonn and Dakins sailed westward to land the army while that of Penn remained before San Domingo. Venables with the majority of the army was prepared for landing on 13 April, whilst those men under the command of Buller and Holdip were embarked onto nine ships on the 14 April.[35]

Upon the separation of the English fleet de Penalva dispatched a further 200 men under the command of Captains Damian de Castillo Vaca and Don Alvaro Garabito de Aguilar to the small fort at the mouth of the River Hine, the expected landing place. The Count had quickly realised that this position was strategically important and was 'to be the one which should be most carefully looked to' and it was later further reinforced by 100 men under Don Juan Morfa Geraldino. The Count strengthened the guard along the city walls, sent ammunition and supplies to San Geronimo and sent a body of 50 men across the *Rio Santo Domingo* in the unlikely event that the English landed on that side, it being 'a wild and rocky coast'. As a further precaution he sent some of the civic officials to patrol the streets 'to prevent the women from coming out of doors', he instructed the 'nuns to remain in their convents and cloister' and ordered all 'foreigners of every sort to be gathered into the jail'.[36] The speed of de Penalva's reaction in these first hours of danger, with his immediate call for assistance from the outlying settlements on the island, as well as dispatching messengers to governors of neighbouring Spanish colonies, were an indication of the steely determination of the Spaniard to resist this English attack. De Penalva most definitely was not the sinful Spaniard, too lazy to fight, that Thomas Gage had encouraged the English to believe they would be opposed by. On the contrary he proved himself to be a determined, competent and resourceful commander who was unafraid to seek advice from those with more knowledge of the island than himself, as he frequently sought the opinion of Don Juan Francisco Montemayor, the previous governor whom he had just replaced.[37]

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[32] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.18–19.

[33] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.3.

[34] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.151.

[35] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.81–82.

[36] Francisco Facundo de Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives of the English Attack on Santo Domingo 1655* (London: Camden Society, 1926, Vol. XIV), p.52.

The English fleet must have spent an anxious night offshore, preparing for the landing on the following morning. As had been decided at the Council of War held three days previously Venables was to land the bulk of the army at the mouth of the River Hine, within easy marching distance of San Domingo. However, on the day of the landing, 14 April, Vice Admiral Goodsonn refused to run his ships into the shore at this point, claiming 'he durst not venture the Fleet without a Pilot in a strange and dangerous place'. Captain Cox, a guide from Barbados who had only recently returned from the island, was nowhere to be found despite Penn's assurances to Venables that he was aboard Goodsonn's ship.[38] Having drifted past the mouth of the river Venables then had an altercation with Goodsonn and demanded he return to the River Hine and land him there, to which Goodsonn retorted that it was too late to return as the wind was by then against them and that they would have to land farther to the west. Given the professionalism that Goodsonn was to show throughout the campaign it would seem unlikely that his refusal to land at the River Hine was for any other reason than practicality, despite Venables' later claims otherwise.[39] Goodsonn's refusal, coupled with an unfavourable wind, drew the fleet farther westward towards the port of Nisao, in point of fact, some 30 to 40 miles from San Domingo, and here the army was forced to land. Not only did the English now have to undertake a long march, but the element of surprise was also lost.

Venables wrote that the landing:

> occasioned a long and tedious March Forty miles or thereabouts in a Woody Country we knew not, and without any Guide save Heaven; the land burnt up with a drought, so that our Horses and Men … fell down for thirst … our very feet scorched through our Shoes with the Sand and Gravel, there being no grass save in Sevenas; and the heats in this torrid Zone at the highest, the nights cold and much dews; which with eating Oranges for thirst (wanting water), made our Men … more apt to the Flux.[40]

The landings began early on the morning of Saturday 14 April 1655 'at the narrow end of a beach'[41] with 'All ye boats in ye fleete … Imployed all day in Landing ye men, & horses' in what was described as a 'good sandy bay.' The landing force, commanded by Venables himself, comprised his own regiment with those of Fortescue, Carter, Doyley and the sea regiment of Goodsonn, together with a half of Holdip's men, the company of *reformadoes*, the two dismounted troops of horse, the 'Scout Master General's foot troopers' and the firelocks commanded by Captain Pawlett. Each man before disembarking received three days 'beefe, & bread' whilst each musketeer was provided with 14 rounds of shot and three yards of match.[42] According to one eyewitness, 'very earely wee began to land our men without the appearance of opposition'.[43]

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[37] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.53.

[38] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.60.

[39] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.20–21.

[40] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.20–21.

[41] Penn, *Memorials*, p.82.

One writer commented that 'No sooner were they all landed ... but they began to promise to themselves mountains of gold. Nothing busied their minds and thoughts more', but the army was to be immediately disappointed.[44] No sooner was the army ashore and formed up, which was by then 'neere evening',[45] the proclamation concerning no plunder was read at the head of each regiment 'which did much discontent the Armie'[46] and caused 'but evil encouragoment'.[47] The English soldiers, many of whom had only enlisted in the expectation of receiving a share of the plunder, were informed 'That, when they should enter into the town (not including the pleasure of God in the business) they should not plunder any money, plate or jewels, neither kill any tame cattle, upon pain of death.'[48] The sea regiment apparently took this order harder than most when they declared 'What doue we doure heare, shall we venter our lives for nothing?' and were only placated by the intervention of their offices who managed to soothe their anger.[49] Venables was later to say the army 'fell in Mutiny' by first the sea regiment and then the rest of the army, claiming that 'whilst they had no Pay they would have all [the plunder] they could get'.[50] One commentator present with the expedition, though not necessarily at the landing, wrote 'The seamen noe sooner hereinge proclaimed, noe plunder, laid downe armes, and so most of the army by the example, and though mush sweetness used by the generall and officers, noe cordialls could mittigate that poisonn'.[51] Mutiny is perhaps too strong a word though the army was certainly disgruntled and needed to be placated. Presumably they were informed that they would receive six weeks' extra pay *in lieu* of plunder, a hollow promise really given the army lacked the funds to pay the soldiers their regular pay, let alone this extra bonus. With no alternative the army's anger subsided somewhat, and 'in this discontented humour we march'd in a most sad and miserable manner in an unknown Country, tormented with Heat, hunger, and thirst'.[52] One eyewitness was to later write, in disgust, of the English attitude towards plunder when he said:

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[42] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.127; NMM, WYN/10, Journals, relating to service in the West Indies 2 Mar 1654–14 Sep 1655, by William Fowler, Richard Rooth and William Burrows, Wynne Papers; Penn, *Memorials*, p.81.

[43] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.54.

[44] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.379.

[45] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.54.

[46] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.152.

[47] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.379.

[48] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.379.

[49] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.152.

[50] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.25.

[51] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.505.

[52] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.25–26.

> Thus may seen the avericious intents of some (more than ordinary) men, who desire rather to heap up to themselves abundance of treasure, enjoy fair houses, rich plantations, and all things suitable thereunto, than to glorify God in their actions; making the price of blood their inheritance, and that, before they know, whether that shall first obtain, or afterwards live to possess.[53]

Meanwhile, to the east of the English landing place a further 100 Spanish soldiers, mostly lancers, were dispatched to the small but growing guard on the River Hine.[54] The Spanish forces were advised of the English landing at Nisao when a fisherman, who happened to be on the beach when the English arrived, made a quick getaway and notified the garrison on the River Hine.[55] A force of 100 men was immediately dispatched under Captain Damian del Castillo Vaca to Nisao to shadow the English, and if possible take some prisoners from which they could try to ascertain the invaders' intentions. It was these Spaniards that the *reformadoes* encountered on the evening of the landing.[56]

Once the disturbance caused by the declaration had been quelled, the army began its march inland along the single track that led from Nisao to San Domingo. The *reformadoes* leading the van 'in manner of a forlorne', seconded by the scout master general's 'foot troopers' whilst the firelocks marched on both wings (none of the artillery was landed at this stage) in the woods to 'discover ambuscados'. Only a part of Doyley's regiment was ashore by the time the army commenced its march, with those already landed leading the main body of the army, accompanied by Venables himself who later described that the army set marched 'without any Guide save Heaven' across a 'land burnt up with a drought' whilst 'our very feet scorched through our Shoes with the Sand and Gravel, there being no grass save in Savanas', whilst the nights were cold accompanied by 'much dews'.[57] After 3–4 miles the body of Spanish under Castillo were spotted ahead of the army in a 'large sevanna' and a file of the *reformadoes* were dispatched to disperse them, which they duly did. With night fast approaching Venables gave the order to rest upon the savannah, which was close to the River Nisao at which the army was able to drink. During the night the remainder of Doyley's regiment and the dismounted cavalry joined the army. Upon the savannah was a lone house belonging to some cow killers which the English happily torched.[58] The relative cool of the night was but a brief respite to the unaccustomed English, who, after their Sabbath day prayers on 15 April,[59] resumed their march 'through woods of incredible thickness' and across 'severall faire sevannas'[60] under the 'excessive heat of the sun'.[61] Already the lack of water was beginning to take its toll as the 'want of water and the heat of the contary [*sic*] did much discoraidg'[62] the army as it marched and 'ere noon severall of our men dropt downe dead for want of water'.[63]

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[53] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.379.

[54] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.127; Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.54; Count de Penalva, 'Count Penalva's Report to Secretary Leguia', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, pp.44–48.

[55] Pardo, 'The Treasurer's Report', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.64.

[56] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), Spanish Narratives, p.4.

[57] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.21.

[58] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p,127.

[59] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.54.

Castillo's small detachment could do nothing to impede the English advance, but he was able to lay a trap in an attempt to catch some advanced scouts at a location referred to as Synagua (probably modern San Gregorio de Nigua). The Spanish, seemingly well hidden, pounced on three unsuspecting advance scouts, killing one (Captain Allen, a kinsman of Venables[64]), wounding a second and capturing a third. One Spanish source claims they aimed deliberately at the English horses to fell them so the riders could be captured,[65] after which the prudent Spaniard withdrew his small force. Upon interrogation the captured scout the told the Spanish of the English intentions and that they had been sent from England by Oliver Cromwell 'protector of that kingdom', that they had recruited further men in Barbados and that their army numbered between 8,000–10,000 men and their entire force had landed. The scout also informed his interrogators that 'their purpose was to take this land and settle it, on said Cromwell's order; and that from here they would pass on to Jamaica, Cuba, Cartagena or other places in [the] Indies.' He even told them the names of the commanding officers of both the army and the fleet. Castillo quickly sent this information back to the city which allowed de Penalva to be 'more intelligently prepared' to defend the city.[66] And so within a day of the English having landed, the Spanish were aware that this was no raid, as Drake's attack had been, but it was to be a fight for the possession of the Spanish colony and the islanders' very homes and livelihoods.

The English rested for an hour after losing their scouts, having marched around 10 miles already that day. Continuing again they marched along a lane 'arched about with orange trees, exceedingly smooth, and soe shadowed that the sun could not shine in upon us', refreshing themselves on the oranges as they went. Castillo attempted to ambush the leading English with 16 of his men as they came out of the lane but 'did noe execution', according to one English witness,[67] when 'a raw recruit fired his gun inopportunely, and the plan to damage the enemy was frustrated'[68] and the Spanish were easily chased off. During this brief pursuit the English stumbled upon a plantation next to a small, partially dried-up river bed that had some 'water standing in severall holes', which they happily drank from. During this, their second day's march, the English noted that the Spanish inhabitants had all fled before them leaving only the sick behind or those 'that ware eaten out with the pox and could not goe',[69] from whom little useful intelligence could be gleaned. It had been a long day for the English having 'marcht hard all day till darke night'[70] by the end of which they had 'sad and weary limbs having in all marched that day 18 miles'.[71] By evening the lack of water was causing real difficulties for them, forcing many to 'faint and die by the way, but they tuk all the care they could, and got wild Horses to carrie the sick'.[72] The army slept along the road once again that night, with its rear at the dried-up river bed and the front 'stretched a mile and halfe farther into a high way'.[73]

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[60] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.128.

[61] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.380.

[62] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.152.

[63] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.128.

[64] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.128.

[65] Pardo, 'The Treasurer's Report', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.64.

[66] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.5; Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.53.

[67] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.128.

[68] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, pp.4–5.

There was to be no respite the following day either, as the army commenced its march onwards at 'about 6 of the clock in the morninge', with Fortescue's regiment now leading.[74] Shortly afterwards a sugar mill[75] was located which 'yielded good water, brave hoggs, and fruites' as well as a large quantity of sugar.[76] The English came upon a chapel there 'but all the Ballpated friors were gone'.[77] Inside was found much Catholic imagery and a richly decorated statue of the Virgin Mary which for amusement the soldiers pelted with oranges.[78] Another English witness gleefully wrote that the chapel was furnished with much Popish 'trumperie, which wee wasted'.[79] They also found a 'greate and strong an iron chest that it could neither be remov'd nor broken open by such of the souldiery as attempted it'.[80] Shortly afterwards another plantation was discovered in which they found 'sugar, cotton, horse, hoggs, and fowle' and where they rested for a couple of hours. At just after noontime they continued their march towards the River Hine and soon stumbled upon 'a large lake of good water, and therein good store of wilde fowle, as duck and mallard'. Continuing for another few miles they finally reached the River Hine around mid afternoon, where they saw a single man on the other side of the river to whom Venables sent a good swimmer across the river, to establish who he was. When the swimmer returned he reported that the man was in fact a sick soldier of Holdip's regiment who was able to report that Buller had landed that morning on the other side of the River Hine and marched inland towards the city.[81] Morale must have sunk when the soldiers heard that it had in fact been possible to land at the mouth of the River Hine after all, making their tiresome march of the past three days unnecessary.

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[69] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.152.

[70] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.54.

[71] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.128.

[72] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.152.

[73] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.128.

[74] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.128.

[75] Probably the one owned by Pedro Nieto.

[76] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.128.

[77] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.152.

[78] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.152.

[79] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.129.

[80] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.129.

Unable to cross the river at its mouth, Venables sent out scouts to locate a suitable crossing place, with some possibly heading north along the river itself through the farms of Don Francisco Garabito and a second belonging to Francisco Tapia. During the afternoon the army heard firing coming from the direction of the city, leading Venables to believe that Buller was involved in a firefight with the Spanish, which gave him a dilemma. Unable to cross the river, and with an exhausted army, he was unable to provide Buller with any support but unless he provided assistance Buller's inferior force might well be in jeopardy. Finally Venables decided 'to Hazard the loss of that partie, and to rest the armie' on the other bank of the river rather than go to his aid. Later he received word from Buller that the firing had in fact been between members of his own force who 'did fier one att the other and hurt 4 men, and that wose all'.[82] Late that night elements of Fortescue's vanguard found a ford, most likely the one on Don Juan de Mieses' property, located approximately where the current *Autopista 6 de Noviembre* crosses the River Hine, to which Venables immediately dispatched 'a party of 150 of each regiment ... to secure the passe'. With the ford in his possession he was now able to cross the river, reunite his army with Buller's force and continue his march upon the city.[83] However, by now the army was tired, thirsty and hungry as most of the provisions it had landed with had been consumed; as Venables later complained, although the soldiers were to be issued with three days food many were only given enough for one day, for which he blamed the fleet.[84] Once back in England he was asked by Charles Fleetwood if it were true that Major General Heane had found a ford closer to the river mouth but that Venables chose to ignore this and seek for one farther inland. He denied this, not surprisingly, but the fact that Fleetwood had been told that this was the case suggests that somebody else had reported this supposed incident to the Council of State. Perhaps it was Buller, no admirer of Venables, who had let it be known that a closer option was ignored by the general.[85]

As had been previously planned, a second landing was to be attempted to the east of San Domingo by Colonel Buller with his and part of Holdip's regiment. Unfortunately no suitable landing place could be located on the eastern bank of the *Rio Santo Domingo*, 'the pilots not being able to give good account of any fit place to land, on this side, for going ashore' and so this detachment attempted to land at the mouth of the River Hine on 15 April[86] – the very same location where Goodsonn had refused to land Venables only the day before and which was also the location where Sir Francis Drake had landed in 1586. Barrington, one of the officers in Buller's regiment, claimed the reason for their failure to land to the east of the city was because 'the surf of the sea ran so exceedingly high that it was somewhat impossible to accomplish our desires in the intended place, but was forced to seek another for our landing'.[87] However this landing could not be effected that day due to the large concentration of Spanish troops along the river, who were at the time erecting a breastwork and other defensive preparations. Penn instructed them to attempt a second landing early the following morning, being Monday 16 April.[88] This time they were successful as the Spanish force covering the beach made a hasty retreat upon their arrival, leaving behind 'two greate gunnes'[89] when the *Selby*, a frigate of 24 guns, engaged their position around the earthwork on the river's eastern bank.[90] Upon Buller's landing Penn dispatched Rear Admiral Dakins with the *Torrington*, and 'with such of the heavy-sailing ships or prizes as you think fit' to take up station off the River Hine with a view to 'hold correspondence with Gen. Venables, especially at his passing that river; and [to] supply the army, according to his desires, with victuals, ammunition, and what else is in the fleet' and afford Buller and Holdip 'what assistance you may'.[91]

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[81] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.129.

[82] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.153.

[83] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.55; Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.130; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.152–153; Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.22–23.

[84] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.21, 94.

[85] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.80.

Buller, once all his men were landed, began to march towards San Domingo unsupported and contrary to his orders at around midday, and aided by the guide Cox, who had reputedly lived in San Domingo for some 12 years.[92] One of his officers, Francis Barrington, was to later acknowledge that 'the army was not come to us' when the decision to advance on the city was made by Buller and his officers. According to Barrington they 'wanted water very much' and so a party was sent out 'to discover [where] our men might refresh themselves with water'. Having wasted time searching some nearby plantations for water, which he found 'vacant and waterless',[93] Buller ordered an advance on the city 'supposing it better to fight than dishonourably to march back'.[94] According to Whistler he was encouraged to undertake this when an African-Caribbean, who had 'formerly lived with our English', made contact with him and 'give them great incordidgement of the ennemies unabilitie to fight them' and that he would show the English the way to the city.[95] During this advance Buller spotted the fort of San Geronimo but for all the bravado of his sending a forlorn hope to face it, he soon retired back to the River Hine, for 'he had noe orders for what he did' after 'performing not any thing worth the Memory', and being 'almost choked for want of drink'.[96] Buller, having scouted up to the very walls of San Geronimo, retired back and camped that night around the Medrano farm on the de Jayna road.[97] A letter from Richard Holdip, who was with Buller at the time, and which was sent to Venables in early 1656, gives a slightly different take on the situation. Holdip recounted that Buller's force advanced no more than six miles that first day after landing but that even this 'brought our Men to that Extremity for want of Water that I never heard the like complaint as was the next morning amongst them'. He squarely blamed this on 'the forwardness of Coll. Buller', who later admitted to him that he had 'no orders to March'.[98]

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[86] Penn, *Memorials*, p.82.

[87] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.572.

[88] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.82–83.

[89] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.505.

[90] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.22–23; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.152–152; Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.5; Penn, *Memorials*, p.82.

[91] Penn, *Memorials*, p.83; Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal', p.10.

[92] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.21, 96.

[93] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.505.

[94] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.572.

[95] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.153. This might be the former slave belonging to the governor of St. Christopher referred to in the following chapter.

Most sources imply that Buller landed on the eastern bank of the river, that is on the city side, which means his force would not have needed to ford the river. However, in a letter written by John Daniel the following month he intriguingly noted that when Venables and the army arrived at the River Hine in the late afternoon of 16 April 'they beeing come into the passe off the river, forded by coll. Buller, which the army cold nott then find fordable, the generall immediatly marched along the river'.[99] This certainly suggests that at least elements of Buller's force had initially landed on the western bank and that he had found a ford which he had used, close by the river mouth, and which Venables was later in the day unable to locate. Furthermore, Venables clearly states that the guide Cox had informed him that there was a ford at the mouth of the river, and that when Venables arrived at the river 'we search'd for' but could not find it 'and supposed the Ford was above higher, but we left it at the influx of the River into the Sea, an unusual place to find a Ford in, and never thought of'.[100] A note in the margin of Venables' *Narrative*, not written in the same handwriting as the rest of the manuscript, states:

> This ford was at the mouth of the river which is the general rule in the W. Indies, where the Sea Breeze and current usually cast up a Bar of Sand over which the Water is extremely shallow, so that though there is depth of Water on each side the Bar for large vessels, yet upon the Bar itself nothing but a canoe can pass without grounding.[101]

Interestingly the maps of 1679 both show a ford close to the river mouth, below the ford that Venables used at de Mieses' sugar mill. On these maps there is no road marked on either side of the river where this ford was located, which suggest that it was either tidal or perhaps seasonal and therefore only usable at certain times. This could explain why Venables was unable to locate it in the afternoon but Buller had found it in the morning, and why Cox was adamant that it existed. Venables was sure there was a ford at the river mouth and he was to argue that had Buller remained at the landing area as ordered, knowing where the ford actually was, his army would have been able to cross and obtain provisions from the fleet the day he arrived on the River Hine. Instead he was necessitated to search the river for a ford, and expend precious water, food and energy for a further 24 hours after which the army was ambushed when searching for Buller. It is no wonder that Venables was to blame Buller for much of the disaster on Hispaniola.[102] Had the impetuous Buller followed his orders the entire campaign might have turned our very differently for the English.

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[96] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.153; Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.380.

[97] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.7.

[98] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.22–23.

[99] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[100] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.26.

[101] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.26 n.1.

The Spanish forces lurking on the east bank of the River Hine, knowing it was only a matter of time before the English located de Mieses' ford and turned their flank, withdrew from their exposed position along the river as Buller was landing on the morning of 16 April but only after defiantly 'having let them [the English] have a volley of musketery'[103] and then retired to the fort of San Geronimo and back into the city itself. This rapid and unauthorised withdrawal created a degree of panic within the city as de Penalva initially thought those retiring were in fact running away, and so he had the first to arrive arrested before being informed that Castillo, the commander at the River Hine, had sent them back.[104] De Penalva, now beginning to understand the situation, instructed the commander of the fort at San Geronimo to 'defend that castle to the death'.[105] He also sent out a force to cover the entrances to the city which were deployed at *Pozo del Rey*, a small earthworks within 'two musketshots'[106] of San Geronimo, which then became the advance headquarters of the Spanish forces. He seems to have made no attempt to protect the fords across the river however. From this advanced position at *Pozo del Rey* parties were sent forth into the woods to ascertain by which route the English were advancing by. One of these patrols, commanded by Captain Manuel Gonzalez Pallono Tinoco, stumbled across the advance guard of Buller's small force about a mile north of the river, at a distance of 15 paces. After a brief exchange of shots, the Spaniard withdrew. Pallano informed the commander in San Geronimo that the English were on their way and to expect them by sundown. The commander, sensing impending doom, requested Pallano to let the Count know that 'the men he had were young, and that in saying this he had said all there was to say'. The Spanish sources suggest that Buller's force was taken to be the main English army, for they believed the Nisao landings to be nothing more than a diversion.[107] But this assertion hardly seems credible given that Castillo had shadowed Venables for two days and must surely have seen his entire strength, which would hardly have suggested his force was merely a diversion. Most likely these comments were just a manifestation of the understandable confusion experienced by the Spanish as they grappled with appreciating the full extent of the threat that was facing them at the time.

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[102] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.26 n.1.

[103] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.5; Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.53.

[104] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.5.

[105] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives* p.53.

[106] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.6.

[107] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, pp.6–7.

8

The Advance

It was very early on the following morning, Tuesday 17 April, that Venables' army, tired, hungry and above all thirsty, waded through the warm water of the River Hine, three to four feet in depth, and onto its eastern bank, where they greedily drank their fill of nearby fresh water. Once the army had reformed, for 'the badnesse of the passage havinge put the army in disorder',[1] the army turned southwards in search of Buller's force. Venables makes it clear that his intention that day, after crossing the river, was to 'march to the Harbour to take in Ammunition and Provision, and to refresh our weary sick and fainting Men with some rest' and not to make any attempt on the city.[2] In their search for Buller they found de Mieses' sugar mill, probably situated along the bank of the *Arroyo Guajimia*, the stream that flows into the River Hine just below the ford that the English had just crossed. At the mill they found only sugar as 'the other goods were conveighed away'. To the amusement of the troops they also found the statue of 'a black Virgin Mary to enveigle the blackes to worship'.[3] According to Venables they wasted some time here unsuccessfully trying to get 'a Spaniard who lay bed-rid' to give them directions to where the fleet was.[4] Two African-Caribbean slaves also approached the English army and Venables was hopeful they would be of use to him. One of them had previously served Sir Thomas Warner, governor of St. Christopher before being captured and enslaved by the Spaniards. This particular slave, who spoke both English and Spanish, was to later prove useful, even killing two Spaniards and was later given his freedom by the army.[5] Near the mill the army encountered an Irishman who was living on the island and who promised to lead them to more drinking water and the fleet. According to Venables he was wary of believing the Irishman, 'but Capt. Butler press'd with great earnestness to believe him, saying he durst pawn his life he was honest and charg'd me by virtue of my Instructions to follow his Advice, and some of the Officers being so pressing, I durst not refuse'.[6] If this were true it is another example of the civilian commissioners interfering with the military but it also reflects poorly upon Venables who meekly allowed Butler to override his military judgement. That Venables' inability to stand up to Butler in this incident is important because two other witnesses, plus Venables, all admit that it was by following the Irishman that the army fell into the first ambush and the consequences of this ambush were to prove catastrophic for the English.[7] Buller's force, which had retired to the River Hine the night before, also sent out patrols during the day and around mid afternoon the two divisions of the army reunited, probably somewhere in the vicinity of the junction of the Esperilla and de Jayna roads shown on de Penalva's map to the east of the river.

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[1] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, p.55.

[2] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.26.

[3] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.130; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.154.

[4] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.26.

[5] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.130.

The Spanish, seeing that the sizeable English army was rapidly approaching the city, were now in a quandary as to how best to defend themselves from this united, and overwhelming, English army. Having sent out parties to watch all three possible routes the English could take on their advance upon San Domingo, during which some light skirmishing had taken place, they needed to decide whether to attempt to fight now in the open, and hopefully defeat the English, or to withdraw into the city and try to withstand a siege. At an impromptu meeting of the senior officers and de Penalva on the afternoon of the day before some had argued it was better to fight in front of the walls along the heavily forested roads which were ideal for the setting of ambushes. Others argued that to attack and kill many English in such attacks was pointless 'if he kill as many for us'. With such a superiority in numbers the English held the advantage. Others were of the opinion that to rely upon holding out during a siege, with no prospect of relief, was too risky for 'if we do not risk fighting in the field, but wait until the enemy besiege the city, we are lost'.[8] Still undecided, the Count personally reconnoitred the terrain and disposition of his forces to the west of the city near to Fort Geronimo on the morning of 17 April and discussed again with his senior officers whether to give battle there or withdraw behind the city walls and take their chances in a siege. Pallano was one of the officers that accompanied the Count and in a show of *macho bravado* he exclaimed to de Penalva, 'This place is inexpugnable if we take the field, and lay ambuscades for the enemy. I entreat your lordship to give me men … [and] I promise a great victory, God helping.'[9] During these discussions Sergeant Diego Rodriguez Tirado approached the Count and reported that, upon his own initiative, he had scouted ahead and located the English barely 'a musketshot beyond Rozo del Rey, between the Jayna and Esperilla[10] road', resting.[11]

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[6] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.27

[7] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.27; Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.130; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.154.

[8] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.7.

[9] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.7.

[10] La Esperilla was then an area outside of the city walls, above San Geronimo, and on the more open plain in front of the city.

[11] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.8; Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.54).

The English force that Tirado had spotted was most likely the detachment under Major Bland that had been sent out by Buller, with the guide Cox, to reconnoitre the fort at San Geronimo and to find Venables if they could. Holdip, who was with Buller that day, states that Bland remained out for too long, leading an anxious Buller to send Holdip 'with a small Party to them to know what was the Occasion of their stay'. Holdip caught up with Bland at a location which he called 'the meeting of the ways',[12] which could only describe the junction that is clearly shown on de Penalva's map[13] and the 1679 map.[14] Holdip describes this as being 'about half a Mile from the fort'. Accompanied by Cox, the two of them followed a small path through the woods to 'a piece of fallen Ground which lay next adjoining to the Fort, and about a quarter of a Mile distance from it.'[15] Having reconnoitred the fort Holdip returned to Buller, leaving Bland at the junction where he remained until mid afternoon when the forward elements of the main army encountered them. This incident is important because Venables, Holdip and Buller all believed that it was the advanced elements of Buller's force that had been spotted by the Spanish, and it was this force that they laid an ambush for and not the main army. It was into this ambush which the unsuspecting Venables subsequently marched and for which Venables was to later blame Buller, and so if this did not create the rift between the two it certainly exacerbated it.[16]

Spanish sources seem to concur with the English officers' conclusions, and De Penalva, sensing an opportunity, acted quickly. He immediately sent an advanced detachment under the command of Captain don Alvaro Garabito de Aguilar, a 'valiant and honourable gentleman', to lay an ambush 'at the edge of the woods' along the 'road that leads to Boca de Jayna and Esperilla'. He selected a spot just in front of *Pozo del Rey* knowing that the English had 'halted at a cross-roads, an arquebushot from our ambuscade'.[17] This force of around 150–180 men consisted of musketeers, harquebusiers and lancers was drawn from de Aquilar's own company 'from the militia of the city of Bayaguana'[18] and others selected from the garrison's own 'skeleton companies'. Also present was Don Francisco Garabito, whose own farm lay on the western bank of the River Hine and who would have known the terrain here intimately, and Captains Miguel de Villafana and Esteban Liranso.[19] As Garabito was preparing his force in the early afternoon artillery fire was heard coming from the fort at San Geronimo. Fearing the English had launched an attack against it, the Count dispatched a small force of cavalry under Pallano to ascertain what was happening.[20] Arriving at *Pozo del Rey* Pallano enquired of the soldiers there if they knew what the firing was about, but they replied that they did not know. He then asked for Garabito's whereabouts and was told that he was in ambush farther to the west of their position. Rather than continue on to San Geronimo to see for himself, he instead went in search of Garabito who he soon found 'up against the bush on the other side of the road that leads to Boca de Jayna and Esperilla'.[21]

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[12] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.23.

[13] AGI, *Plano de la ciudad de Santo Domingo y sus alrededores (República Dominicana)*, *c.*1656, MP-SANTO_DOMINGO, 52.

[14] AGI, *Plano del campo de la ciudad de Santo Domingo, entre la muralla y el río Haina (República dominicana)*, 1679, MP-SANTO_DOMINGO, 77.

[15] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.23.

[16] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.23.

[17] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.55; Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.9.

[18] Bayaguana is around 25 miles/41 kilometres from San Domingo.

[19] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.9; Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.54; Pardo, 'The Treasurer's Report', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.65.

It is not clear from the Spanish sources exactly where Garabito had laid his ambush, but it seems to have been close to the point where the two roads join, maybe half a mile to the west of *Pozo del Rey*, 'at the edge of the woods, because there were many trails and cuts there'.[22] Diego Pardo, the Treasurer, described the location as 'where the woods end in a savanna, before this city, a quarter of a league from it, where the Castle San Geronimo is'.[23] Penn described the location as 'in the bushes betwixt the town and the westward fort one mile and a half from it, called Jeronimo'.[24] The actual location is probably somewhere close to the present *Parc Mirador del Sur*. The terrain was ideal for an ambush for the road here was 14 or 15 paces wide and flanked by thick woods and undergrowth. The temperature would have been unbearable for the English who had marched all day and who would have been extremely fatigued at this point, as well as extremely thirsty. Venables force had crossed the river at de Mieses' ford in the morning and had advanced up the Esperilla road whilst Buller had marched his force up the de Jayna road, and at some point in the early afternoon of 17 April the two forces had finally met, most likely close to the juncture of the two roads. Here the entire army rested, probably for much of the afternoon when the heat was no doubt unbearable for the poorly acclimatised English. Most likely Tirado had spotted the English resting here when he was out scouting earlier in the day.

After resting and reorganising, Venables led part of his army away from the mill and along the single track that led out of the forest towards *Pozo del Rey* and the city. According to Penn the English forlorn hope was commanded by Captain Edward Blagg, major of the Sea Regiment and captain of the *Marston Moor*, it being the turn of the Sea Regiment to lead the vanguard of the army that day. Penn further claimed that as the army began its march towards the ambush Venables was also in the forlorn hope 'with a musket on his shoulder'.[25] One English witness noted he and 'some few more' were 'going in a carelesse manner before the forlorne to view the fort', which presumably Buller had just informed him about.[26] It would seem, however, that not all of the army participated on this march as Fortescue's regiment, as well as Heane himself and probably other elements, remained at de Mieses' mill.[27] It is probable that at this moment Venables was not contemplating a general advance on the city with the intention of attacking it. For all his mistakes Venables was an experienced commander and had been in tactical situations such as this before, both in England during the Civil War and afterwards in Ireland. He would have known that after meeting with Buller he only had a couple of hours of daylight left, and not having performed any prior reconnaissance he would have known it was impractical to launch any sort of attack that day. Furthermore, he had no scaling ladders, no artillery and seemingly no agreement with Penn for the support of the fleet. He certainly had not planned on being in this vicinity at the time; circumstance had brought him there. It would seem probable that his intention that afternoon was to undertake a reconnaissance in force, with only a part of the army, to assess the terrain and the Spanish defences with a view to formulating a plan of attack afterwards. Possibly after meeting with Buller and being advised how close he was to the city walls and San Geronimo he thought it sensible to see for himself before returning to the main body of the army and heading for the River Hine for supplies. This would explain why he was with the forlorn hope in the company of his engineers when the ambush was sprung. It might also explain his readiness to withdraw the following day knowing full well he did not have the resources needed to make a head-on assault. Whilst this is giving Venables the benefit of the doubt it does not explain, nor excuse, the blunders that he made later.

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[20] In fact the fort had been firing on an English foraging party from Buller's force.

[21] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.9.

[22] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.54.

[23] Pardo, 'The Treasurer's Report', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.65.

[24] Penn, *Memorials*, p.85.

[25] Penn, *Memorials*, p.85.

[26] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.131.

Garabito had a man up in a tree who gave him fair warning that the English were on the move and heading towards him,[28] without, it seems, any precautions against an ambush. When the trap was sprung, around four o'clock, the English were caught totally unawares as their forlorn hope, which one Englishman claimed to be five hundred strong, 'hapned [*sic*] to fall into an ambuschado'[29] as they came between the two hidden lines of lurking Spaniards. Venables claimed that he 'fell upon the ambush, but not into it; for we discover'd them before they mov'd towards us'.[30] The Spaniards fired 'causing more fright than harm, but this led them [the English] to fire, and permitted our lancers to come out with less risk'.[31] In this initial confusion Captain Pallano and the few mounted followers with him charged into the disorganised English whilst de Aquilar's lancers attacked on foot. Instantly the forlorn hope was routed. Estimates vary between 20 and 70 men were killed in this initial onslaught, including Captain Catts of the Sea Regiment and the adjutant general, Captain Thomas Walters. The Spanish claimed only seven or eight of their own were wounded in the engagement, although in the confusion they accidentally killed one of their own 'who was despoiling an Englishman on the wood trail. He was blonde and they thought he was English.'[32]

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[27] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.55.

[28] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.10.

[29] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.380; Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.55.

[30] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.96.

[31] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.10.

[32] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.155; Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.11.

This somewhat hasty retreat of the English forlorn hope caused Captain Pawlett's firelocks to turn, and who 'shamefully rann, and beate the *Reformadoes* into disorder'. Shaken, the *reformadoes* eventually regained their composure, stood their ground and in doing so received two close-range volleys from the Spanish muskets, which killed Captain Jennings, their commander and one other. Recovering, these *reformadoes* returned fire and their determined resistance forced the Spanish to retire 'bearing away theire dead and wounded'.[33] The arrival of the Sea Regiment stiffened the English resolve further and their advance forced the Spanish to withdraw 'facing aways to the enemy, and taking no more steps in retreat than were necessary to load. Since the enemy was numerous, not a bullet went to waste. Like hail theirs sprinkled our scanty number, without doing any damage.'[34] Gaining momentum, the 'army then enraged'[35] began to advance along the road towards the city capturing the advance headquarters of the Spanish at *Pozo del Rey*, which Barrington described as a 'small sconce'. According to Barrington, who was personally present, the forward elements of the army advanced beyond San Geronimo 'without any loss received from it; the rear might have advanced with the same security the van did' had the order not been given to halt.[36] Another English witness, however, describes some of the pursuing English as being 'cut off with the great shot from the fort [San Geronimo], which was situate near the sea-side, and commanded that passage through the wood to the town'.[37] Another writer, not himself present at the time being with the rearguard, noted prior to capturing *Pozo del Rey* 'the enemy threw the gunns into a well adjoyneing to the said fort, and with rubbish spoileing the water quitted the fort, which our men tooke possession of'.[38] Even one Spanish eyewitness commented that by the end of the evening the English were masters of the field.[39] With the Spanish now in flight across the small plain before the city walls it seemed as if the English might be able to turn defeat into victory, but with darkness descending and the army weary and thirsty they quickly lost momentum. One confident English eyewitness claimed, 'and had not extremity of thirst, hunger, weariness and night resisted, wold that night have entred [*sic*] the towne; but necessity hath noe lawe, all impatiently cryed water, and many feinted.'[40]

As the Spanish withdraw, or as Whistler bluntly put it, when they 'fled out of the fort and rune for the Cittie',[41] they were reinforced by a further 250 men from the city but seeing the English continuing their advance this force soon retired behind the city walls under cover of artillery in Slaughterhouse

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[33] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.131.

[34] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.12.

[35] Thomas Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[36] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.572; Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.55.

[37] Park (ed.), I.S. - *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.380.

[38] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.55.

[39] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.6.

[40] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[41] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.154.

Fort and San Geronimo, which they had to be careful to avoid. The retiring Spaniards were met by de Penalva himself and 'he was pleased to see the lancers running with blood, and the booty'.[42] Despite the casualties that the Spanish had inflicted they were still vastly outnumbered by the English army which had swiftly regained its composure and was now menacingly in the open ground in front of the city walls. At this point de Penalva must have been extremely concerned that the English would follow up their advance with an attack on the city itself. Such was the panic within the city that some Spanish were seen to be leaving with their possessions, believing it only a matter of time before the English would storm the walls. To counter this the Governor sent officers to the waterfront to ensure 'no soldier or man able to bear arms' left the city.[43] Had the English but known of the Spanish disarray after this brief encounter San Domingo would have been at their mercy.[44] If they had been led by a more competent, and imaginative commander, maybe the city could have fallen, perhaps not that night but possibly the following day. The advantage was most definitely with the English that night. Despite their fear of an imminent attack, the Spaniards did send out small patrols to try to learn what the English were planning, but in the dark they could ascertain very little.[45] The English, almost at the very gates of the city, were exhausted and their commander devoid of ideas; the army lay 'without water, ready to perish' as one witness later wrote[46] – a paralysed fighting machine.

Spanish sources downplay the latter stages of the day's fighting. The *Notorial Account* makes no mention of the English capture of *Pozo del Rey*, nor their advance towards the city walls. Instead it claimed that after the ambush the English immediately retreated to the River Hine 'because of the damage done him from San Geronimo castle, and from slaughter-house fort, and forts at the great gate, and from the wall, all of which command the countryside'.[47] Pallano's account, whilst more accurate of the events after the ambush was sprung, makes light of the chaos that the Spanish forces were in, comparing the Spanish success with those gained by their countrymen around Grenada against the Moors.[48] The Treasurer Pardo's account seems to have been more fanciful. He stated that after the initial ambush the 'enemy retreated in all haste by the route over which he had come and made a stand at the said sugar mill'. The mill was then attacked by 400 men, according to Pardo, and the English defeated 'and our forces compelled the enemy to retreat to Boca de Jayna'.[49] Whether coordinated or not, there is a sense that the Spanish attempted to cover up the English success at the end of the day in their accounts of the battle, which would seem to suggest how perilous they deemed their position to be at the end of the day's fighting, and even though victory was ultimately theirs, they were unwilling to even acknowledge how close they had come to defeat that night. Venables can be criticised, rightly, for many of the decisions he made throughout the campaign, but perhaps none were as detrimental to the English cause as the mistake he was about to make. The English temporarily held the tactical advantage. They had fought off a Spanish attack, limited though it was, and sent the Spanish fleeing in panic back into the city. He occupied the ground in front of the walls and there were by now no Spanish outside of the city. Despite his army being tired and thirsty he held the initiative. Venables probably never intended to march on the city that day but the tactical situation had changed rapidly after the ambush was repulsed, and he now found himself with an advantage that was begging to be followed up; yet instead of consolidating his position, obtaining resupply from the fleet that controlled the mouth of the River Hine, and preparing to assault San Domingo, he inexplicably chose to retire the army to the river, make camp on the coast and reorganise.

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[42] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.13.

[43] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.55.

[44] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, pp.10–13; Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.131; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.154–155; HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.572; Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.55.

[45] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.13.

[46] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.131.

[47] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.54.

[48] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.13.

[49] Pardo, 'The Treasurer's Report', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.65.

Why he made this decision has never satisfactorily been explained. Venables later gave his reasons for retiring as his army being exhausted after their long march, most of the soldiers were without food and all of his men were thirsty. He had no artillery, ladders nor any guide (as Cox had been killed) and they did not have much ammunition. Interestingly he also stated 'If we went on we must leave the Town betwixt us and our Fleet, and by consequence betwixt us and our Victuals and Ammunition.' This implies that Venables was considering attacking the city from the north, rather than from the east, as from his current position the only direction he could attack which left the town between him and the sea would be from the north. Perhaps Cox, who had purportedly lived in the city for 12 years, had let Venables know that the northern part of the city had no curtain wall enclosing it.[50] Venables concluded by stating the obvious: 'To Carry fainting and almost famished Men upon a storm, in the dark night, in an unknown place, where we could not Choose the fittest Place to assault, after some had fasted five, and all two days, without Ammunition, was thought madness.'[51] Whilst this was all true it does not fully explain his reasons. The tactical situation had changed, in the favour of the English, but he seems to not have recognised this and was unable to envisage what to do next. Certainly Venables' actions seem to suggest he was unable to grasp the tactical realities facing him on Hispaniola. It is probably unfair to blame Venables totally for the landing of the army at Nisao, although reconnaissance and better preparation on his part would probably have mitigated the effects of it. Venables in his own explanation of his actions gives no indication that he actually had a specific plan formulated to capture city after he landed. How he was expecting to breach the walls is unclear. He had no artillery with him and there seems to have been no coordinated plan made with the fleet for them to batter the walls and make a breach through which he could storm the city. Venables had no scaling ladders with him either, and only decided to make some during his first period of rest on the River Hine. The fort of San Geronimo held such a commanding position that he was unable to approach the city walls in daylight for fear of its guns, and he seems to have had no plan to neutralise it, or perhaps he was not even aware of its existence until Buller informed him of its presence. It is true that his army was tired and thirsty as a result of the long march from Nisao, but had he landed at the River Hine as planned he would still be faced with breaching the city walls without artillery or ladders. He seems to have made no attempt to reconnoitre before the attack as Drake had done. When Goodsonn was to attack the Spanish Main on various occasions after the occupation of Jamaica, he sent men ashore in small craft at night seek intelligence. Venables failed to even do this before the landing. Perhaps he was expecting that his show of force would be sufficient to scare the Spaniards into surrendering, or hoped that his soldiers would easily force an entry into the city through the gates simply by being there, as Drake had done previously. But as events were to prove, Venables was no Drake.

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[50] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.27.

[51] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.27–28.

Perhaps he was just overly cautious and was unwilling to risk the possible adverse consequences of a more belligerent approach. Elements of his army had just been engaged in a classic encounter battle, and whilst the army had ultimately remained steadfast, Venables himself displayed his weakness as a commander by making a series of poor decisions. Through his own shortcomings he was unable to take advantage of the favourable tactical situation that presented itself, and this must have had an effect on his judgement and confidence. It is true the army had suffered a scare when it was ambushed and part of it fled in panic. But this was only the forlorn hope (which, as its name suggests, was expendable). The *reformadoes* were made of sterner stuff and were able to stabilise the situation, along with the Sea Regiment but these were the only units that were affected by the ambush. The rest of the army was intact, and under the competent leadership of officers such as Heane and Fortescue, was itching for the opportunity to engage the Spanish. Even though many of the soldiers were new recruits with minimal training, Venables still had a nucleus of experienced men in the regiments. The regimental officers would have known who these were and it would not have been too hard to draw them out to create a composite force with which to lead an attack on the city. In fact this was exactly what he had done the night before when the ford had been located and he needed reliable men to secure it, and it was also a tactic widely used in Jamaica. It is also true that the men were hungry and thirsty for their three-day rations would have been consumed by then. Venables was to make much of the fact that the army was constantly thirsty and of the adverse effect this had on it. But all along the march the English were able to locate drinking water, so they had not been without it since the landing. Perhaps more of an issue was their inability to carry water with them as the soldiers did not have personal water containers, but it is known that the English did carry some containers with them as the Spanish found them the following day as they followed the English retreat to the River Hine.[52] Furthermore one English eyewitness noted that the soldiers had made 'callabashes off water'.[53] These were in fact water containers made from the hollowed out shell of the native *Lagenaria siceraria*, also known as the bottle gourd. Whilst not a perfect substitute for bottles or barrels they were ideal for individual soldiers to carry at least some water with them while on the march. Whilst it is doubtful the army had enough of them, they at least had some. One English officer in Fortescue's regiment admitted that the fleet 'could with speed have conveyed to us' drinking water when required.[54] Furthermore with the English in close proximity to the River Hine itself from their position in front of the city walls, water could be collected from there, and even if that water course was too salty to drink, the stream that flowed through de Mieses' sugar mill, directly behind the English, certainly had fresh water as they had drunk from it that very morning. Undoubtedly the water flowing through this stream was substantial, as it was used in the sugar cane production, and so was a local source of drinking water for the English. One English account even confirms that when Venables army arrived there on the morning of 17 April they had 'plenty of water at a plantation'.[55] So whilst the lack of water was a major concern, perhaps an imaginative commander could have found a more practical solution for providing it to his men.

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[52] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.14.

Another explanation for Venables' decision is that maybe he was personally scared and this influenced his desire to return to the river. It was rumoured at the time that upon the first shots being fired that afternoon Venables had fled into the woods and only reappeared after the Spanish had retreated, and was so 'very much ashamed, but made many exskuces: being soe much posesed with terror that he could hardlie spake.' Three English eyewitnesses were to comment on Venables' supposed cowardice that day and all noted he only made his reappearance after the Sea Regiment had stabilised the English ranks.[56] The General later claimed in his own defence that he had been in the woods searching for an ambush, a duty 'which I couldn't procure others to do'.[57] Penn claimed that Venables was carrying a musket in the forlorn hope and was mistaken as a common soldier by the Spanish, and so when the ambush was sprung it 'gave him opportunity to get behind the bushes, and so about to his own men'.[58] Whistler, a seaman and no admirer of Venables, sarcastically wrote that when the attack upon the English began he 'very nobelly rune behinde a tree'.[59] It cannot be proved now if these accusations were true or not, but throughout his military career Venables had demonstrated personal courage and so it would seem unlikely that he fled. However, if he was personally scouting in the woods as he claimed, this demonstrates a lack of judgement by placing himself in such a position within the vicinity of the enemy; while it seems inconceivable that, as the commander of the army, he was unable to command anybody to undertake this role. Whatever the truth of the matter, all sources (including Venables' own testimony) confirm that he played no leadership role at this crucial moment and if subsequently the English then found themselves in a position of advantage, it was not because of Venables' own actions. Undoubtedly the General, at this moment, lost the respect of the army he commanded and his future actions did nothing to regain it.

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[53] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[54] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.55.

[55] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.55.

[56] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.154; Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.95–96; Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.131.

[57] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.96.

[58] Penn, *Memorials*, p.85.

[59] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.154.

Most likely Venables' decision to retire was based simply on the fact that he was really devoid of ideas and was unable to formulate a more suitable plan under pressure. But whatever his motivation, the decision to retire doomed English attempts to capture Hispaniola and ruined Cromwell's plan to forge a new English empire and to gain the riches of South America. Venables later defended this decision by claiming, firstly, that his men were short of food and many were dying of thirst. Secondly, that they were wanting in ammunition, thirdly, that their guide, Cox, had been slain in the skirmish. Fourthly, he claimed that as darkness had then fallen, it would have impossible to see where to assault the city, and finally that the army carried no scaling ladders.[60] None of these excuses are satisfactory, and can be easily dismissed. Water, of course was an issue but could, in the short term, have been alleviated. The army had landed with three days' rations and whilst these would have been consumed by the night of 17 April, armies before and since have fought successfully without food. Even so, he could have maintained his position and had food brought up from the River Hine.[61] With only a few of the units involved in the fighting during the afternoon, the bulk of the army would still have had sufficient ammunition with it whilst more could easily have been obtained from the fleet. Venables' explanation that he needed a guide is preposterous. When the decision to retire was made he was at the very walls of the city, he did not need a guide to tell him where San Domingo was! An army is trained to scout and gain intelligence using its own resources, and if Venables was in need of information he had plenty of men in the army who could obtain it for him, just as they had found the road to San Domingo from Nisao for him and de Mieses' ford.[62] Venables' claim that it was too dark see where to assault the city walls is valid enough, but with the Spaniards now behind the walls he could easily have waited until daybreak and then formulated a plan of attack, or at the very least propose to the city some terms for surrender. It is also true that the army had no scaling ladders, as Venables had thought fit not to order any to be made, but these could have been made from the trees that surrounded the army, just as armies have done from time immemorial. Venables' later excuses were just excuses. He had failed in his mission and was grasping for explanations that deflected the blame from his own shortcomings.

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[60] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.82.

[61] In fact Penn on his own initiative had landed food at the River Hine that morning. See Penn, *Memorials*, p.84.

[62] A Portuguese guide was captured by the Spanish during the campaign, he also had Cox and the Dutch guide Kempo Sibada, who was to prove of immense value to the English on Jamaica (he had also been a guide for the Providence Island Company in the 1640s TNA, CO1/33, Privy Council and related bodies: America and West Indies, Colonial Papers (General Series), Addenda., 1656, f.46.), so Venables was not without guides.

And so that night, at a council of war, and against the advice of many present, Venables decided to retire the army to the River Hine and there to refresh, rest and receive provisions from the fleet. Once the army was prepared it would then attempt a second march upon the city. Major General Heane, and others, were against the proposal and wisely argued that to retire would only stiffen the Spanish resolve and allow them time to strengthen their defences. To attempt a second march from the River Hine would again exhaust the army, given the oppressive climate, and with the Spanish emboldened by the English delay it would make them more susceptible to attack and further ambush.[63] With hindsight Heane was correct, as this is precisely what happened. According to Whistler, who probably was not present at this meeting, Venables explained his reasoning for retiring to his officers with an analogy. He said that 'he had sene to rames a fighting, and after thayer first goeing back they came up with a great deal more fors the second time then they did the first' and with this he would brook no further discussion on the matter.[64] And so 'notwithstanding … the enemies disorder, the officers' desires, [and] the cheerfulness of the soldiers' spirits to march' Venables ordered the retreat.[65] Evidently the decision to retire was not popular with the soldiery. The 'old fellow souldjours' of Fortescue's regiment greeted the order to retire with reluctance. Some of them approached their junior officers and claimed that as they had less need of water they would be prepared to remain where they were, allowing 'those that wanted might goe back and refresh themselves' and that they would 'rather suffer … than leave their wounded fellow souldjers to the mercy of the enemy'. When these sympathetic officers took the suggestion up with their senior officers they were curtly informed 'not to dispute commands, but to obey orders' and that the only reason for the retreat 'was want of water'.[66]

English casualties were not excessive. In addition to Jennings being killed so too was Adjutant General Walters, Captain Catts of the Sea Regiment, Captain Cox of the firelocks (who was also 'the chief guide for that place'[67]) as well as two civilian secretaries, Mr. Temple and Mr. Murford.[68] Penn believed the number of English dead to be around 30 plus 'others, wounded' while he also claimed some 'two or three hundred being supposed to have famished' for want of water.[69] One Englishman claimed 'In this exploit, some were lost on either part … but the greatest number were English.'[70] Another estimated the English dead to be 'about 20 upon the place',[71] whilst another wrote 'wee lost our principall guide with about 50 more kil'd, and many wounded'.[72] The Spanish accounts give varying numbers of English dead but they are always prone to exaggeration where English casualties are concerned. Pardo claimed they 'killed more than 200 men, besides wounding many more'.[73] Carvajal stated only that the Spanish had inflicted much 'damage' on the English.[74] Pallano was equally vague when he claimed 70 English were killed in the initial ambush, 'not counting those we afterwards found dead along the Esperilla road and the bush, who were many'.[75] English casualties were probably under 100 dead and wounded, whilst the Spaniards' were most likely minimal as they had retreated almost as soon as the English rallied and there was little close order fighting afterwards, although one Englishman claimed around 20 had been killed.[76]

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[63] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.154–155.

[64] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.155.

[65] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.572.

[66] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.56.

[67] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.380.

[68] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[69] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.85–86.

[70] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journall*, p.380.

[71] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.131.

As the army began to trudge back to the River Hine the seamen in the fleet had little knowledge of what was happening on land. They had no doubt heard the frequent gunfire but as none of the action had taken place in line of sight of the ships under Dakins' command at the mouth of the Hine, they were unable to follow events with any certainty. On the night of the landing at Nisao, Penn had seen 'the light of a great fire to leeward, which we supposed might be our army after landing'.[77] During the following days those vessels that had landed Venables' army returned to the fleet, but were unable to provide any further news other than that the landing had been successful and unopposed. What news they had came from messengers that were sent to the fleet from time to time from the army, but these were unable to provide anything but fragmentary pieces of information. Venables does not seem to have had the opportunity to communicate directly with Penn until after he returned to the River Hine. On 17 April the fleet, under its own initiative, sent supplies ashore at the River Hine when a 'good quantity of meat was boiled, and that with bread, &c., was landed … and secured in a house for the army'.[78] That evening they saw 'some bickerings' around Fort Geronimo, which would have been the advance of the army up to the walls of the city.[79]

On the following day, as the army was heading back to River Hine, part of the fleet before San Domingo exchanged cannon fire with the city defences but to little effect. 'They [the Spaniards] seemed to be ill gunners, most of all their shot falling within strange distances from the ships aimed at.'[80] Penn never gave the order for a wholesale bombardment of San Domingo from the sea, which is surprising given that the damage and chaos resultant from such an attack would have disrupted Spanish efforts to defend the city and would have helped Venables considerably. It might also have encouraged the defenders to surrender, had they been summoned. Perhaps it had been agreed not to bombard the city as the English believed the show of force alone would be sufficient to force its surrender, or that they needed it intact as a base for further operations. There seems to have been no coordinated plan to capture the city discussed with Venables and so it is possible that Penn was waiting on events and the opportunity of discussing further with Venables how to utilise the fleet when he chose to attack. This is a plausible explanation, for on 20 April, when the fleet itself came under heavy fire from the city, it was under direct orders not to return fire.[81] Whatever the reasoning at the time for not using the power of the fleet's guns to support Venables, it was a mistake and one that contributed in no small way, to the English defeat. Without using its firepower to batter the city the fleet could do nothing but blockade San Domingo by sea, so as to hinder any attempts to relieve the city with men and provisions (unlikely though it was), and it was partly for this reason that the frigates *Selby* and *Grantham* were ordered to ply off 'Cape Cegoa (3–4 legs [*sic*] to ye Windward of S Domingo)'. Another reason for their dispatch was to keep a watch for the store ships that had as yet not arrived.[82]

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[72] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.56.

[73] Pardo, 'The Treasurer's Report', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.65.

[74] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.54.

[75] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.11.

[76] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.56.

[77] Penn, *Memorials*, p.82.

[78] Penn, *Memorials*, p.84.

[79] Penn, *Memorials*, p.84.

[80] Penn, *Memorials*, p.84.

On 18 April Penn wrote to Venables suggesting that if the latter thought it necessary to capture Fort Geronimo 'for the speedier conveyance of supplies from the fleet to the army, and holding a more quick correspondence' between the two, then the fleet was ready to support this attack.[83] In anticipation of such an attack the *Hound*, the *Arms of Holland* and the *Falmouth* did approach the city, sounding as they went, but as the *Swiftsure* approached she came under fire from the city, which 'fired several guns at us, whereof two did hit us, the one grazed the foremast about 4 inches in, and the other came in between decks but did no harm, blessed be God'.[84] Throughout the day, and into the following, there was a scrappy exchange of fire between the ships and the city and its forts (at least one Spanish officer died after his foot was hit by an English cannonball),[85] but there was no wholesale bombardment against the city nor any of its defences in support of Venables advance. Indeed, on 19 April, Penn specifically ordered that this small flotilla 'should fire no more guns but what needs must'. These ships were withdrawn the following day once Penn was made aware of the reverse the army had received upon its first advance on the city.[86]

With no naval bombardment the effectiveness of the fleet was more psychological than material. The thought that a powerful fleet lay at sea must have had a demoralising effect upon the population of San Domingo, but unfortunately the English failed to capitalise upon this with an effective bombardment. Whilst the army was ashore the fleet was divided into three squadrons, with part anchored in Hine Bay under Rear Admiral Dakins with orders to provide the army with both victuals and ammunition as required. A second part, including the *Arms of Holland* and the *Falmouth*, was given orders to lie off San Domingo, within easy sight of the city. On 18 April, the day after the first ambush, these ships were given orders to fire on the city for a short time, though their effect was minimal. This caused a degree of panic from within the city as the shells fell on those entering or leaving the city. In reply the guns from within the fortress and those from Forts Slaughterhouse and Schoolhouse opened fire. Of these only two shots hit but 'did noe harme, blessed bee God', and it was claimed the Spanish 'being none of the best marksmen'.[87] The balance of the fleet remained at sea, along with Penn, to await events. Aboard ship life continued as usual, with a general fast being observed on 22 April. One incident occurred upon the *Swiftsure* illustrates the dangers on board a sailing ship at that time. A certain Thomas Lidy 'going up to put on a vane on ye foretop-gallant-mast head, fell there upon ye deck, & was sore bruised his left arme att ye wrist broken, & his scul wuch concused but praised bee God hee is very hearty & I hope will recover'.[88]

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[81] NMM, WYN/10, Journals, relating to service in the West Indies 2 Mar 1654–14 Sep 1655, by William Fowler, Richard Rooth and William Burrows, Wynne Papers.

[82] NMM, WYN/18, Letterbook, 26 Jul 1654–4 Sep 1655, includes list of ships in squadron, Wynne Papers, f.55.

[83] Penn, *Memorials*, p.85.

[84] Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal', p.13.

[85] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.15; Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.55.

[86] Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal', p.13.

Thus it was that late on the night of 17 April and during the following morning, the English began their withdrawal to the River Hine, for as one commentator incorrectly stated there was 'noe knowne water nerer then Drake's landing place'.[89] Morale must have sunk as they turned their backs on the field of battle, their dead and their objective, and it was necessary for the retreating English to have a 'strong rare guard to preserve the fainty sicke men'.[90] Another observer wrote 'In this march our men fainted excessively'.[91] Whistler wrote:

> This March back againe did kill more men than the enemie did, for they did faint and fall doune for want of water: sum would beg of thayer comrades to make water in thayer mouths, which if any did most of them did ris and march. But many did die by the Way for want of water, one quart would have saved many lives.[92]

Withdrawing back through de Mieses' sugar mill, they turned south along the track that passed Bernardo Luis Carabello's house on the east bank of the river, arriving at the landing area that Buller had used by midday.

Penn, observing from offshore, soon realised something was amiss, ordered supplies to be immediately landed, and ensured that they were dispatched daily whilst the army remained quartered around the mouth of the river.[93] Even though there was a shortage of stores and supplies in the fleet it is clear that Penn did his best to provide for the army, despite Venables' later claims to the contrary. Whistler noted that Dakins' squadron was ordered 'to boyle meat all day and Night for the Armie, and to send Brandie ashore and Bred, and this to Harten the Armie'.[94] However it was not so simple to land provisions there. Water and food needed to be loaded onto the smaller longboats and pinnaces before coming ashore, and even then the landing was wrought with difficulties.[95] Dakins, responsible for landing the supplies, complained that due to the sea 'breaking far from the shore, it was very difficult to send in any boats for water at Hina [River Hine]' during the course of which 'he had lost one boat, and two or three men, about it.'[96] The difficulties the fleet experienced landing supplies suggests that Goodsonn had every reason to be cautious about attempting a landing of the entire army at this location only days before.

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[87] NMM, WYN/18, Letterbook, 26 Jul 1654–4 Sep 1655, includes list of ships in squadron, f.54; NMM, WYN/10, Journals, relating to service in the West Indies 2 Mar 1654–14 Sep 1655, by William Fowler, Richard Rooth and William Burrows; Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.132.

[88] NMM, WYN/10, Journals, relating to service in the West Indies 2 Mar 1654–14 Sep 1655, by William Fowler, Richard Rooth and William Burrows. Reprinted in Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal', p.10.

[89] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[90] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[91] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.132.

[92] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.155.

The English army, still close to 9,000 strong, would have required a considerable space to encamp. Spanish sources relate specifically that the English retreated to *Boca de Jayna*,[97] the mouth of the river and the English confirm that they withdrew to the place Buller landed,[98] which was actually on the beach, next to the river mouth. This area is now the *Puerto Haina Oriental*, the main container port for the Dominican Republic. As the River Hine flows southwards towards the sea it turns sharply west, at a spot close to the modern bridge that carries the *Carratera Sanchez* across the river on its way to the coast and the southern suburbs of San Domingo proper. Then, after only a few hundred metres, the river again turns sharply south and almost immediately discharges into the sea. If a line were drawn directly south from where the *Carratera Sanchez* first touches the right bank of the river to the sea, the land to the west forms a rough rectangle, surrounded on three sides by water, making it easily defensible. It was here that the English encamped. The 1679 map clearly shows this area and in fact after the English defeat, de Penalva built a defensive wall along this imaginary line to protect the city from any further attacks, for the coast inside this rectangle was the only location suitable for a seaborne landing to the immediate west of San Domingo. Hemmed in though the English were, it was a position of strength. Presumably they built some makeshift barricades along the land side and most likely posted sentries farther inland as well. Supplied from the sea and with the Spanish only able to approach from one direction, Venables must have felt confident that his army was secure. In fact on the only occasion that the Spanish did attempt to attack the English position they were easily repulsed. Nonetheless, this area is not large, perhaps only two square miles, and so it would have been extremely overcrowded if the entire army was inside at the same time; the sanitary conditions within would soon deteriorate and very quickly it would become unhygienic and filthy, making it the ideal breeding ground for disease.

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[93] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.380; Penn, *Memorials*, p.86

[94] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.155.

[95] Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal', p.14.

[96] Penn, *Memorials*, p.86.

[97] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.14.

[98] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.132.

If Venables had just made the greatest blunder of the campaign by ordering the withdrawal, he was now to further exasperate it by the decisions he made over the next six days, when the army lay encamped within this narrow and claustrophobic perimeter. Already embarrassed by his ineffectual, some called it cowardly, performance during the attack on 17 April he almost immediately compounded this by leaving his men ashore whilst he slept aboard the fleet, with his wife. Whistler derisively wrote of him that he returned 'to his Ladie, and left his Armie to louck to themselues'.[99] Not surprisingly Venables was to get a lot of criticism, and much derision, for his decision to leave his men and sleep offshore, which incensed the soldiers even more as it was common knowledge that his wife accompanied him. Whistler continued his swipe at the General when he wrote that whilst he had 'a good ship under him and his wife to lie by his side, [he] did not fele the hardship of the Souldgers that did lie one the sand untell the Raine did waish it from under them, hauing littell or noe vitelles, and nothing to drink but water. But the Gennerall did not consider that.'[100] Venables, knowing he had much criticism levelled at him for this, later tried to justify his actions by stating 'my self being extreamily troubled with the Flux, having neither Tent nor other shelter, and the rain then falling, did for three nights go aboard to Lodge in a Ship about musket shot from the Shore, and returned in the morning'. Many of his soldiers were in the same condition as he was but were never allowed the opportunity to sleep aboard.[101] Venables and his wife further aroused the indignation of Whistler when, on 20 April, he left the *Swiftsure* apparently to go ashore but he 'could not part with his ladie, but did carrie her with him, but he did not goe any farder then abord our Rar Admiriall [the *Torrington*, commanded by Dakins], and thar did lay all night with his Ladie.'[102] To add to Venables' shame, Penn made a point of noting in the ship's journal that when he came aboard the *Swiftsure* on 19 April 'Gen. Venables, when on board, took a vomit.'[103]

Ashore the health of the army rapidly declined, and after only a few days it was racked with disease. The physical condition of soldiers would have been suffered considerably from both the lack and quality of the rations they had been eating ever since leaving England four months previously. The searing heat that they had encountered since landing would have sapped the strength of the poorly acclimatised English, whilst the enforced marches of the past few days compounded their problems. Fatigued, malnourished and dehydrated, their immune systems lacked the ability to resist the disease and infection that was to appear in the overcrowded and unhygienic camp next to the River Hine. Matters were made worse by the rains that now descended upon the island. With no tents and little shelter the soldiers quickly developed fever-like symptoms, aggravating their other health problems. Many of the English commentators wrote of the poor state of the army during this first period of rest on the River Hine. Daniel wrote that the army was:

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[99] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.155.

[100] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.156.

[101] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.34,

[102] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.157.

[103] Penn, *Memorials*, p.86.

> feeding on the worst saltest beefe unwatered, withall the moldy brown dirty biskett, allowing us noe brandy or comfortable licquor, caused such imoderate desire off water, which (that river coming from a copper mine) afforded rather to encrease then quench thirst, and the raines nightly powring, with foggs and dewes along the river, so soaked our bodyes with flux, and none escaping that violence, that our refreshment proved a weakeninge, instead of support.[104]

Barrington states that it was during this first rest on the River Hine that the army started to succumb to sickness 'occasioned through the want of provisions, and the reflection of the scorching sun from the sands'.[105] Whistler graphically noted the spread of disease:

> and now thayer harts wore got out of thayer Dublates into thayer Breeches, and wos nothing but Shiting, for thay wose in a very sad condition, 50 or 60 stouls in a day, and thous that had it but 1 or 2 dayes it mad them soe weake that they were not abell to goe. Now the Souldgers did begin to Murmur at the Gennerall liing abord with his ladie, and keping them ashore in this sad condichone.[106]

He believed that Venables tarried longer than necessary 'pretending to refresh them' but staying in these overcrowded conditions 'did doue the armie more hurt then thayer marching'.[107] In such cramped and unhealthy conditions dysentery and other diseases could spread rapidly, which is exactly what happened. During this first week in camp it took a foothold in the army, which it was to ravage, and then the diseases were taken with the army to Jamaica, causing endless pain and suffering.

It was as much a surprise to the Spanish as to the English soldiers that the order to retire from before the city walls on 17 April was given. The Spanish were preparing for the inevitable English assault but upon confirmation that the English were retreating the Spanish were jubilant, comparing this with the victories gained before the walls of Granada against the Moors, and 'the people recovered from their fear and became convinced that the multitude of the enemy was not irresistible'. Perhaps not believing his luck, de Penalva sent a small force of cavalry to shadow the English retreat, through the sugar plantation owned by Don Juan de Mieses Ponce de Leon, which had been totally despoiled, and back to the River Hine.[108] Pallano later described what he saw as he followed the retreating English when he noted that:

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[104] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[105] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), pp.572–573.

[106] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.156–157.

[107] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.156.

[108] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.13.

> [along] this route we found vestiges of a great army. The ground was almost covered with orange peels, and elsewhere there were oranges they had squeezed, drinking the juice in their thirst. There was sugar which they found at the mills between Nisao and Jayna; and tobacco; and knapsacks, some full of clothing, others of biscuit, others of meat; and many strings of plucked Fowls; squashes; little barrels and small kegs in which they carried water; some pikes and implements; a great quantity of books, like prayerbooks; white paper,[109] and many shoes, some not worn; and a lot of little things, and, finally, even a ferrule with its whip.[110]

Despite the English withdrawal the Spanish were not convinced that the English were beaten. The day after the English had withdrawn, a rumour spread through the Spanish forces that they were advancing again on the city. This caused quite a stir as de Penalva mustered his forces to once again block their advance. A reconnaissance force under captains don Juan de Lugo and Don Alvaro Garabito was dispatched in the direction of Don Juan de Mieses' sugar mill, to ascertain if the English were in fact making another attempt upon the city. Not reaching the mill that day they camped some miles short of it. Sending out a scouting party of lancers to Don Lope de las Marinas y Navares' farm to search for any English in the area, they fell upon an English foraging party, killing six and capturing one. The captured Englishman let it be known artillery was being landed in anticipation of a second advance on San Domingo. When he was asked why the English had withdrawn 'when within sight of the [city] walls, being master of the field, he said that they feared another ambuscade that night, and also because they were consumed with thirst'. He further added that the army had more than one hundred women with it.[111]

Throughout the time that the English remained in their camp the Spanish sent out numerous patrols to deny the English access to forage as well as to make their life as uncomfortable as possible. They also kept scouts as close to the English camp as they could, but it is apparent that they were unable to gain much intelligence about English activity. Venables, by withdrawing when he did, surrendered the initiative to the Spanish, who had the freedom now to occupy and control all the terrain outside of the city walls right up to the English camp for the rest of the campaign. The English became hemmed into their camp and could only leave it at their peril. Spanish roving patrols now dominated the countryside, forcing the English onto the defensive and attacking them almost at will whenever they ventured out of their camp. The loss of the initiative on the part of the English was the most crucial repercussion of Venables' timid decision not to stand his ground, and the English were to pay dearly for their general's blunder. Almost immediately English foraging parties became easy targets for the Spanish. As Whistler put it, 'Now did Begin our sorow, for our souldgers would goe to kill wild cattill, and the ennime would lay in the Bushes, and as they came by them would fall upon them with thayer Lances, and kill and spoile all or most of them.'[112] Six English were killed on 19 April, while the following day some 37 were killed when foraging near de Mieses' mill. In this attack an African-Caribbean page-boy belonging to one of the Spaniards was shot and later died when gangrene infected his wound, as a result of the English having 'bit their bullets', perhaps referring to the practice of biting part of the round bullet to make a jagged edge, which caused a more traumatic wound when it entered the human body.[113] Later that day the Spanish attacked a party of English fetching water from the River Hine, killing a further 10 or 12 of them.[114] The English quickly learned to respect the Spanish lancers who were to take many of them to an early grave during these encounters. Whistler explained that during these attacks 'the innimie nevrer fier a musket att our men, but fall upon them unwers [unawares], and Lance them thorow and throrow'. These lancers 'goe by the name of Cow killers, and inded it is thayer trad … Thes are those that doth doue all the mischefe.' He further reckoned that without the cow killers and the 'Negors and Molatos which are thayer slaves' then the Spaniards 'ware not abell to hould up his hand against any ennemie, for the spaniyards are so roten with the pox and soe lethegic that they cannot goe 2 mile byt they are redie to die.'[115] The English, however, were not siting idle as the Spanish picked off their foraging patrols. On 20 April, as different Spanish probing patrols made their way south towards the sea through the heavily wooded terrain, the English sent out fighting patrols of their own. De Penalva was present with a patrol that clashed with an English unit sent out to discourage them from advancing further. Later that day Pallano, with a force under his command, was attacked on the de Jayna road and caught completely unawares by the English, forcing him to make a speedy withdrawal 'about a musketshot's distance'. As this was a sufficient distance to safely regroup, it seems the English were not prepared to follow up these small victories too closely. Pallano later heard another English patrol had killed seven or eight Spaniards.[116]

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[109] Possibly the paper worn for identification on the soldiers' arms when they first landed.

[110] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.14.

[111] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, pp.15–16.

De Penalva was fearful that these attacks upon the English, scrappy and uncoordinated as they were, could in fact have an adverse effect on the Spanish and he ordered them to cease. If the English gained the upper hand in these skirmishes it might motivate them further whilst defeat of the Spanish would lead to casualties they could ill afford to lose, whilst also affecting their morale. De Penalva was acutely aware of the disparity in numbers, and whilst he might have the initiative now, that could quickly change.[117] The prudence of this course of action is demonstrated by a rash attack on the English camp that led to multiple Spanish casualties for no gain. Emboldened by the retreat of the English and their ability to attack stragglers and foraging parties almost at will, a small party of Spanish under the command of the locally respected Captain Pedro Velez Mantilla decide to attack the main English defences before their camp, most likely the line from the river to the coast. Creeping up through the bush they got 'within pistole shot of our maine garde before any of our men did see them', many of whom were busy 'sharing of thayer vitelles'. Totally surprised, the English guards were quickly surrounded and their cries for quarter alerted the rest of the camp and 'did give an alaram to the Armie'. A force under the command of Captain Stevens, probably the captain in Doyley's regiment and the same officer who was to distinguish himself in 1657 on Jamaica, immediately counter-attacked. The captain 'being gredie of fighting' ran so fast towards the enemy that he 'did hardlie stay to take any men'. Upon Stevens' arrival Mantilla, who was seemingly mounted, 'did alight from of his hors' and attacked the Englishman.[118] Mantilla was described as 'a man of many parts and of much nobility and valour'[119] and who carried 'a sword and a target on which his arms were emblazoned' and immediately engaged Stevens in single combat. Mantilla 'led one his parttie afut, with a backe sord and targat in his handses, and Capt Stevens coming up with him did lay at him, but the Spaniard did gard with his targat, and strike with his back sord, and att last wounded Stevens and he fell.' The captain was replaced by his own lieutenant and the struggle continued until the Englishman 'struck up his heles, and ran him throrow'.[120]

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[112] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.155.

[113] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.17.

[114] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, pp.15–17.

[115] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.156.

[116] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.17.

[117] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.17 n 76.

As the Spaniard died the English swarmed over the by now outnumbered Spanish and 'made the ennime to rune, killing 30 of them'.[121] The Spanish were to later claim that in this hotly contested engagement 'only the brave fought' and all the dead were from Mantilla's own company. The fighting was so heavy that neither his body nor his horse could be recovered. As both Spanish and English accounts essentially tell the same story, fanciful though it is, this little cameo undoubtedly occurred. It does however highlight de Penalva's concern of losing unnecessary casualties, and in fact he himself felt the need to go forward and order the remnants of the attack to withdraw before they got themselves into further trouble. In this attack it was recorded that the former slave from St. Christopher who had joined the English a few days earlier had killed one Spaniard and wounded another and was heard to be shouting to the English soldiers 'Give the dogs no quarter'. Barrington admits to 10 English being killed in the attack.[122]

Back in the city the Spanish had been extremely active during the most welcome of respites. De Penalva ordered that victuals be brought in from the surrounding areas and for these to be stored within the walls of the fortress in case of a siege. The garrison was warned to be ever vigilant, whilst the forts along the city's wall, and San Geronimo in particular, were reinforced and resupplied. In the city every street was reinforced by a newly dug trench and each of these were covered by freshly sited artillery. The governor evidently intended 'to resist the enemy by evry avenue'. A boost to the City's morale occurred when, on Sunday 22 April, Captain Luis Lopez Tirado arrived from Santiago with 100 much needed soldiers, and from this time onwards not one day passed without further reinforcements arriving from throughout the island.[123] Despite the quite obvious success that the Spanish were gaining in these skirmishes with the English, they did little to reduce the apprehension that the Spanish were feeling as to what the English would do next in their attempt to capture San Domingo. After consultation between the military and the civic authorities, it was decided as a precautionary measure to evacuate the womenfolk from the city. Meanwhile a judge, Don Diego de la Puerto, was stationed on the waterfront to ensure that no soldier nor man able to bear arms left the city.[124] The English still appeared to be a formidable force and it was only a question of time before they made another attempt on it.

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[118] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.157.

[119] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.18

[120] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.157.

[121] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.157.

[122] Penn, *Memorials*, p.86. See also Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.57; HMC, *The manuscripts of His Grace the Duke of Portland, 13th Report Appendix Part Two*, Vol. 2 (London: HMSO, 1891), p.572.

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[123] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.19; Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.56.

[124] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.55.

9

The Disaster

The Spanish were aware that the English invaders were preparing to attack San Domingo, but de Penalva could not be sure where the English would attack from; however he knew, and Venables also knew by now, that there were only two routes the English could approach the city. If they intended to attack from the west they could only march up the de Jayna road from their camp and at the junction with the Esperilla road turn east, past the location of the first ambush and into the more open land in front of the city walls by *Pozo del Rey*. From here they would need to incline south to approach the fort at San Geronimo. The commanding position of San Geronimo was such that any attack directly against the western city walls would be raked by enfilade fire from the fort and so the English would have no option but to assault it first. Knowing this, the Spanish had cleared some of the trees between the fort and the road from the river to *Pozo del Rey* to create a better field of fire upon this approach route. The land directly between the English camp and the fort was impenetrable forest and so the English were unable to go that way in large numbers, even though foraging parties of Buller's force seem to have got through. If the English chose not to attack the western side of the city, and elected to attack from the north, they would be required to undertake a circuitous march north and then east to approach from the northern side. Venables would need to lead his army along the Monte Grande road, entering it at the ford to the north of Don Rodrigo Pimental's property and the land referred to on de Penalva's map as belonging to the free African-Caribbeans, before taking one of the three roads to the northern defences of the city. To get to the ford he would need to take the narrow, but direct, tracks through the forest on the eastern bank of the river to de Mieses' farm, cross the river and then pick up the Monte Grande road. Alternatively, he could take the de Jayna and Esperilla roads to the ford but this would entail a much longer march in the heat, and it would also mean exposing the rear of the column to attack as it turned its back on the city at the junction of the two roads. De Penalva had cavalry posted in the vicinity of the Monte Grande road to watch for the English using this route to the north, but he withdrew these on the morning of 25 April when it became apparent that they were in fact heading up the de Jayna road for the western walls.[1]

Ultimately Venables did attack San Domingo from the western side, but it is not clear that this was always his intention. Venables met with Penn, Winslow and Butler aboard the *Swiftsure* on 19 April at which meeting he briefed them as to the events that had transpired since his landing, and he notified them that he intended a further attempt upon the city, for which he required the artillery to be landed and no doubt provided them with a plan for capturing the city.[2]

If he chose to attack from the west he would first need to neutralise the fort at San Geronimo and then assault the city walls. Undoubtedly San Geronimo was the key to the Spanish defences to the west of the city and given the obvious strength of the place it is surprising that it was never bombarded from the sea. The one significant advantage that the English had, and which the Spanish were incapable of countering, was the firepower of the fleet. Had Penn turned his guns on the fort he could undoubtedly have destroyed it, making Venables' task much easier, and so it can only be wondered as to why it was never ordered. Penn was quick to realise the strength of its position, dominating the approaches to walls, and on his own initiative he even wrote to Venables on 18 April proffering the help of the fleet to capture it if he thought it necessary.[3] As Venables had done very little scouting until then, he might not have even known of the fort's existence before his own landing, although he must have seen it as he missed the River Hine landing spot. Perhaps he only grasped its importance after he met with Buller on 17 April, who must have informed his commander of its tactical importance. According to one account of the first ambush Venables was in fact on his way to reconnoitre the fort when he was attacked. According to Whistler, Penn had again suggested to Venables on 20 April that he could assist in the capture of the fort and that 'he would send 2 or 3 ships to beat doun that fort which did afront them last time'. To this eminently sensible suggestion Venables is supposed to have retorted 'noe, saying it would spoule the fort, and he should not tell how to have it mended againe'.[4] It is therefore clear that Venables was well aware of the tactical importance of San Geronimo and his inexplicable decision to not have it neutralised by the fleet in advance is yet another error of judgement on his part.

During the six days that the army lay by the River Hine he had them, and the carpenters from the fleet, construct scaling ladders to be used in the assault upon the city. The ladders would be vital in any assault against the walls, but realising that the army would struggle to carry both the water and the scaling ladders on their march, Venables had ordered both to be loaded aboard the fleet with the intention of landing them closer to the city on 25

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1 Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.20.

2 Penn, *Memorials*, p.86; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.155.

3 Penn, *Memorials*, pp.84–85.

4 Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.157.

April 'at the landing-place discovered by Capt. Crispin,[5] to the northward of the Fort Jeronimo, in a little sandy bay'.[6] Venables confirmed with Penn that this was still his intention on 24 April, the day he left the River Hine, and as such Penn made the necessary arrangements *and* he also sent his vessels to this point on 25 April to offload, but as Venables was not spotted, they were not unloaded. On the face of it this seems a sensible proposal but it is confusing as to what he really intended. Firstly, San Geronimo was virtually on the shoreline, being on the south coast of the island. Therefore to the north of San Geronimo was in fact land and so it is impossible that such supplies could be landed there. Perhaps this is an error and the writer meant to the east of the fort, which is more plausible but which would mean the English would have to storm the fort before they could pick up the ladders. It also meant that the English vessels would need to come in very close to the shore, between San Geronimo and the city walls, to land them. As there was a gap of about one mile separating the two this is also feasible, if overly complicated. Perhaps a more practical solution would be to land them to the west of the fort where they could be picked up and used in the attack on San Geronimo, but either way definitive plans were made and confirmed for the fleet to take the water and ladders and to offload them in support of an attack Venables was expecting to make against the western walls of the city. Whilst this seems pretty clear, the plans for the artillery were not.

During the days that the army spent on at the River Hine the mortar was brought ashore, as were two drakes and 'some musketts in frames'.[7] One account states that the mortar was the one borrowed from Barbados,[8] although one was certainly issued to the expedition in England, but it might well have been shipped in the transport vessels which had not as yet arrived, which would explain the necessity to borrow one. The calibre of the mortar is not known but after the English departure the Spanish found mortar shells 'bigger than water bottles', which implies it was a fair size, and presumably heavy. This then raises the question of how Venables expected to transport this piece when he began his second attempt on the city and how practical, or sensible, was it for him to try to take it with him. The obvious solution would be to use horses to pull it, but as they were very short of these it is doubtful Venables had any to spare. Manpower to drag a mortar into position, especially if heavy, is only practical over very short distances and in the oppressive heat of Hispaniola it would be impractical to try to manhandle it too far. On 21 April Venables, after ordering the artillery to be landed, was having second thoughts as to the suitability of taking it with him, which is evidenced by his instructions given to Dakins to arrange to send the mortar back and to land it with the ladders and the water.[9] However, for some reason the mortar was not re-embarked, and it and the drakes were dragged on carriages by the soldiers, no small feat in the heat, there being 'noe harness nor horses to draw, but all drawn by soldiers'.[10] That Venables considered carrying the artillery with him suggests that he intended an attack against the closer western walls, even if he later had doubts as to the practicality of transporting it even over this relatively short distance.

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[5] Commander of the *Laurel*. Possibly this refers to the small bay close to the modern *Plaza Juan Baron*, which is between where San Geronimo and the city wall were.

[6] Penn, *Memorials*, p.88; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.157, 158.

[7] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.56.

[8] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[9] Penn, *Memorials*, p.87. At the same time Winslow requested some field carriages on board the *Convertine* and *Discovery* be landed to help transport materials for the army.

Despite the proof that these plans were definitely prepared there is evidence that suggests Venables actually considered attacking from the north of the city. At a Council of War held by Venables and his senior after 18 April it was suggested by Heane, and supported by many of the senior officers, that the army be split into two and that Heane lead part of the army to the north, or east, of the city and attack from that direction, whilst Venables attacked from the west.[11] Venables refused to agree to this at the time and stated he would rather 'march the army in one entire body to the city'.[12] However when the army did finally march from the River Hine on 24 April one eyewitness wrote clearly that it was the intention of the army to find the road that led *north* of the city as it was intended to attack from that direction, but that the wrong track was taken and the entire army ended up in almost the same location at which they were ambushed the week before. Furthermore Whistler, based on his recollection of a conversation between the two generals on 20 April, suggests that Venables intended to bypass San Geronimo as he would 'lett this fort alone, and goe to the Cittie and take it, and then this fort would yield'.[13] This implies his plan was something other than an assault along the western wall, for no attack from that direction could ignore the fort, only an attack from the north could do that.

I.S. clearly states in his narrative that it was the intention of the English army to march north along 'a way they had not yet known, which led to a fresh water river, distant but two miles from the north-part of the town, whither they might pass without danger of any fort'.[14] The river referred to can only mean the *Rio San Domingo*, which flows west to east above the city, and then turns south to form the eastern edge of the city before it flows into the sea. During its west–east course it is also around two miles from the northern defences of the city. The Monte Grande road, the only road to the north of the city, ran virtually parallel to the river before it cut southwards towards San Domingo. Had this been the English intention, to get to the Monte Grande road they would have gone along the tracks leading through the forest heading north from their camp and *not* along the de Jayna road. His account then goes on to advise that as the English left the camp they somehow mistook the de Jayna road for the one they wanted, and instead of marching north 'they drew near the way they had formerly gone'.[15] Whilst only one English account mentions Venables' intention to avoid the western walls by heading north and then that they lost their way the description of the river and its proximity to the northern defences are extremely accurate, too accurate for the writer to be making it up perhaps. It also corresponds with the conversation Venables purportedly had with Penn on 20 April, as reported by Whistler, that he intended to avoid the western defences completely.[16]

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[10] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.132); HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573; Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[11] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573.

[12] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573.

[13] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.157.

[14] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.381.

[15] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.381.

However, if this was Venables' intention is does not tally with the plan to discharge water and the ladders for the army along the coast prior to the attack on the city. Is it plausible that Venables intended to attack from the north and only found himself in close proximity to San Geronimo by accident? The English by now were familiar with the de Jayna road, as both Buller and the main army had used it previously, and so it seems incredulous to believe that the army would have not known they were advancing along it by mistake. Furthermore, whilst undoubtedly the English had not yet grasped the complete topographical layout of the land before them, it is known that they had traversed the smaller tracks through the forest heading north, as Spanish sources confirm they had visited the Spanish properties in the area, and so it seems unlikely that they could have missed them when they departed on 24 April. Probably the most likely explanation for the apparent confusion surrounding the route the English chose to take is that during the planning stages Venables considered both options of attacking to the north and to the west before finally selected the simplest choice – to attack the western side. Perhaps Venables was indecisive and kept changing his mind, leading those officers who were part of the consultation process to get confused as to what his final plan actually was, or they had not even been informed what the plan was to be. Or perhaps he only finally decided on how to proceed just prior to leaving. As such it is difficult to be sure what Venables' plan actually was. If he intended to attack from the north only, then why arrange with Penn to land water and ladders on the shoreline near San Geronimo? The confusing and contradictory accounts make it almost impossible to know for sure what Venables' actual plan was but given the lack of imagination that he constantly demonstrated throughout the campaign, most likely his intention was to do as Drake had done and attack the walls along the seashore and enter the city that way. This opinion is reinforced by the specific arrangements that Penn made to offload the ladders and the water on 26 April at the 'little sandy bay'. He would surely not have risked his vessels going in so close to shore had not he and Venables already definitively prearranged this.[17]

What is clear however, and the Spanish sources with their greater understanding of the topography confirm this, that it was along the Boca de Jayna road that the English marched up when they left their camp in the late afternoon of 24 April,[18] though whether this was by accident or design is not known for sure. Why Venables left it so late in the day to commence his advance is also not clear. Only two miles were gained that afternoon with the rearguard barely even having their encampment, 'and soe lay the army in a marching posture all night'.[19] As morning broke on Wednesday 25 April the English army struggled to its colours, having spent an awkward and uncomfortable night in the dust of the road. Few could have been in a cheerful mood as the army began to march up the road towards the city, the very same that it had hastily retreated along but a week before. By 11 o'clock the lead elements of the army arrived at the farm of Don Andres de Medrano, still on the de Jayna road.[20] The English army was only very slowly proceeding along the de Jayna road that morning 'by reason the mortar pieces and small drakes, for want of horses and furniture, the soldiers drew, by turns.'[21] The effort required by the already weak soldiers to move these guns, and to carry the accompanying equipment 'spent our strongest men, and rendered the weake unserviceable', and so as they approached the Spaniards they were already tired.[22] Early that morning Captain Pallano had been sent out by de Penalva to report on the location of the English, whom he spotted at Medrano's farm, and immediately 'returned at full gallop' to notify his commander of their whereabouts.[23]

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[16] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.157.

[17] Penn, *Memorials*, p.88.

[18] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.20.

De Penalva now knew that the English intended to attack the western wall, and he decided to lay another ambush to make the most of the advantage that the thick forest gave him; he had obviously given the location of where to lay it some prior thought. According to Pallano the 'ambuscade was in the very same place as the first, and along the same distance, where the dead still lay'.[24] But this time he added a twist – the guns of San Geronimo. The road from the de Jayna-Esperilla junction towards *Pozo del Rey* proceeded with forest on both sides which stretched from it for some considerable distance, but at one point the forest on the right side of the road was naturally less dense than elsewhere and due to the angle of the road this section was in plain view of the fort, or more to the point, in line of sight of the cannon in the fort. De Penalva previously had his men clear some of the trees here which gave observers in the fort an unhindered view of this section of the road to *Pozo del Rey*, along which any English advance must come, before the view became obscured again as the road re-entered the forest.[25] The Count's genius plan was to locate his ambush *after* the clearing, so the advancing English would need to march up the road where his artillery could fire upon them as they trudged through the clearing, and once they had reached what they perceived to be the safety of the forest cover he would spring his trap once again.

Ahead of the English, on the right their line of march just beyond the clearing, and concealed in the undergrowth, the Count had placed 100 lancers, newly arrived from Santiago and commanded by Captain Luis Lopez Tirado, supported by Captain Juan Francisco and Don Alonso Estevez de Figeuroa. To Tirado's right were positioned the firearms 'alternating with lancers' under the command of Captain Francisco Bueno. A third body of men were placed to Bueno's right, the closest troops to the city, including the remnants of Mantilla's company who had recently been mauled in their rash attack upon the English camp. On the opposite side of the road were concealed yet more lancers, this time from the city of La Vega, which were commanded by their captain, Don Juan de la Vega Torralba. A reserve was made ready on the flank of Bueno's firearms, while a small body of cavalry was posted to the rear, in the direction of the fort. Perhaps as many as 300 Spaniards lay in wait for the English.[26] All were in position by mid afternoon when some Spanish scouts came rushing up the road indicating that the English were now barely 'two musketshots' distance' away. According to Pallano he instructed all the soldiers in the ambush to lay flat so as not to be seen and then addressed the men to encourage them by saying 'Courage, brave Spaniards! This is the day we are to furnish his majesty a great victory!'[27]

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[19] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.57; Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.132; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.158.

[20] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.20.

[21] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.381.

[22] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[23] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.20.

[24] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.21.

[25] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.21.

The English advance guard, having failed to learn from the last attack, again took inadequate precautions against ambush, apparently more concerned with the danger posed by the guns of San Geronimo. Along the road towards *Poze de Rey* the English marched 'in a good full body, shoulder to shoulder and to swords point', 10 men abreast.[28] This advance body comprised of perhaps 500 men under the command of Adjutant General Jackson.[29] First marched the forlorn hope of 240 soldiers led Captain George Butler, a 'stout, but unexperienced soldier'[30] in Venables' own regiment and the brother of Commissioner Butler, behind whom marched Jackson, who was purportedly the first to flee.[31] Behind these were posted the *reformadoes*, closely supported by the firelocks of Captain Pawlett's company and Captain Carpenter whilst Major General Heane led the small body of horse ahead of the rest of army. To the fore was Venables' regiment, followed by Heane's own regiment followed by the Sea Regiment and behind these ranged the other regiments in column of march.[32] One account claims that Jackson, who had been specifically ordered to 'have two winges in each side the wood, for discovering the ambuscadoes, and cowardly neglectinge the duty of his place (I doubt treacherously) to lead the party' himself, had not made the necessary arrangements and so the English had no idea what was lurking in the dense forest either side of their route.[33] Venables later accused Jackson of

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[26] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, pp.21, 26.

[27] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), Spanish Narratives, p.21.

[28] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.133; Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.21.

[29] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.57; Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.381; Penn, *Memorials*, p.89.

[30] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[31] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.29.

[32] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.132–133, 29.

[33] Birch (ed,) *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.50.

'going against order without any Parties to search the Woods, and with their Pikes in the rear, contrary to order given at the first landing'.[34]

Once 60–70 files of the English had entered the clearing previously made by the Spanish, they seeing the English flags, ordered the guns from fort San Geronimo 'let flie … with case and round shot upon us'.[35] Carvajal was to gleefully note 'the guns of San Geronimo played with good effect … The shells did damage, inflicting heavy loss on the enemy.'[36] Notwithstanding this, the English army continued its march forward through the clearing and back into the forest 'in disorder; in fine, like frightened men'.[37] Little but fear could have been going through the minds of the English soldiery at this moment, but still on they marched. Whistler wrote that as the army marched through the clearing and into the fire of the guns from San Geronimo, the men were more concerned with keeping 'thayer eis all together upon the fort and not garding themselves from any Ambush that might lie for them … but kep marching one lucking upon this fort.'[38] Frightened though the forlorn hope may have been, some of their number were vigilant despite Whistlers observations, for when the English stepped into the noose of the trap an alert officer spotted the hidden Spaniards in the bush. In a desperate attempt to alert his comrades this unknown Englishman 'With a pike in hand, laying it lengthwise across the front of his people, seemed to bid them retreat.'[39] Seeing this Captain Bueno immediately fired his harquebus at the officer, but missed. Upon this sudden, though not totally unexpected single shot, the English musketeers opened fire 'indiscreetly upon them in a volley' though many of the Spanish, wisely, 'did stoup untell they had all shot' to avoid being hit themselves. In this initial exchange Don Alonso Estevez de Figueroa, who was described as 'a gentleman of great promise', was 'slain by two pike-thrusts whilst four others were shot and killed'. Bueno was wounded in the jaw, Captain Tirado of Santiago too was wounded, as were upwards of 20 other Spaniards.[40]

The first shots exchanged, the Spanish leapt from their concealed positions and half-stooping ran at the English musketeers, who, having already fired were now exposed to the dreaded lancers and so 'in the time it takes to say 'Jesus' not an Englishman was left alive of all who had walked into the ambuscade. They all died lanced'.[41] Under such a ferocious attack as this the forlorn hope was immediately routed, the Spanish 'killing and slaying our people in a very sad manner'.[42] In the ensuing panic the fleeing

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[34] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.28.

[35] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.133; Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.23; Pardo, 'The Treasurer's Report', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.65.

[36] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.57.

[37] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.23.

[38] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.158.

[39] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.23. Perhaps this was Captain George Butler of Venables' own regiment and the leader of the forlorn hope.

[40] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.133; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.158; Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.23.

[41] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.23.

[42] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573.

English burst through the ranks of Pawlett's firelocks, carrying them along also into this the rest of the forlorn hope who 'like a torrent in a narrow passage ... tumbled into the reformad[o]e[s]'.[43] The *reformadoes*, altogether of a more defiant quality, were left isolated, and were soon surrounded and quickly annihilated 'there being left of 55 that charged that day about 18'. The rout continued:

> into the horse, they all mixt like a masse in soe narrow a passe, nott able to containe above six abrest (the close thicke woodes encompassinge the sides where the enemy was lodged to flanke us) and the great sort gunnes loaded with smale shot, bitts off iron, broken pistoll barrels, and all such mischiefe, had full power and sure ayme all alonge that narrow passe; which soe routed all them.[44]

Many of the English cavalry with the forlorn hope, unable to manoeuvre in the confined terrain, were dragged off their mounts and butchered mercilessly.[45] Some of the Spanish lancers then mounted the English horses, whose owners by then 'lay stretched on the ground, along with some enemy flags', and chased after the fleeing English down the narrow de Jayna road from whence they had just come.[46] For 'Over three long laps of a horse's running our lancers killed them.'[47] The Spanish 'who had nothing to do but follow and kill'[48] surged forwards after the fleeing English, whose 'backs were so thick that if a blow missed one, it found others to hit, and this a not risk, for they threw away their arms in order to try to push ahead of each other'.[49] As the Spaniards chased the English they 'gave no quarter',[50] while as the panic spread the English offered no resistance to this onslaught, with 'near the one half of the army flying before them, to the great amaze and discouragement of the rest'.[51] As the chase continued the Spanish became more disorganised as well as more vulnerable. Thomas Gillen, son of the high sheriff of Santiago, 'fell dead from two pistol wounds' in the chase after killing 'fifteen or twenty of the enemy'.[52]

In the confined space of the de Jayna road the Spanish lance proved a formidably lethal weapon:

> These lances are the most effective weapons which cruel industry has yet invented against human kind. In this battle we took no prisoners, for these lances do not wound – they kill. Although the enemy be numerous, two lance-thrusts are as quickly given as one. Although they come in armour, as many did, one two-

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[43] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[44] Birch (ed.), TSP, Vol. 3, p.506; Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.57.

[45] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.132.

[46] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.23.

[47] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.24.

[48] Penn, *Memorials*, p.89.

[49] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.25.

[50] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.29.

[51] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.381.

[52] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.25.

> handed stroke lays them low, and the throat or lower abdomen are exposed, so that if the man did not die in the first thrust, he is made a corpse by the second. Each lance head is the size of a man's fist, and they make as big a hole entering as leaving, They are handled by men who use no other weapons, and with them they face a bull or a boar – fierce animals![53]

The English were unable to counter the effects of the lance, shorter and easier to wield than their own pikes whilst being longer than the half-pikes that many carried. The lances were 'directed by able bodies and strong arms, found little opposition of the weak and feeble multitude' of the English who were 'parched by the heat of the sun, and half dead with thirst'.[54] The Spanish were now completely disorganised, however, whilst many of them 'were beginning to despoil the dead' and fearing an English counter-attack de Penalva ordered his officers to attempt to rally their jubilant troops and reform, but this proved hard to effect.

In a desperate attempt to rally the advance guard Major General Heane. 'being of a more Nobell Spirit than the rest' dismounted. Calling for his men to stand and face the onslaught he died 'with his sword sheathed in his enemies bowels, not six men standing by him, for he cried out as he was fighting 'Stand but 10 men and we shall beat them.'[55] But the panic amongst the English was too great for them to help Heane. 'Shamefully deserted by the soldiers … [who] such was their vile cowardice and baseness of spirit, that not one man would do it; whereupon he sacrificed his life, amongst the thickest of his enemies, at as dear a rate, as became a stout soldier, and gallant commander.'[56]

The account given in the daily journal of the *Swiftsure* gives a somewhat more colourful, though not necessarily accurate, description of this heroic incident:

> The enemy who is by none said to have been more than forty pursued, none turning back till the Major-General opposed; against whom a big fellow issued from the fort on horseback, and having heard Haynes call for some of his cheery boys to stand by him, and beat them back, he said 'What make you here, you English dogs? I'll teach you to lead men.' 'Welcome brave fellow!' quoth the Major-General; and, with nothing but a small walking-sword in his hand (being only come up to the head of the army to give orders, and having left his man and his armour in the head of his regiment), encountered him; and the adversary, seeing he could do no good, rode a little into the wood, and brought out eight with him, lancers. And Thomas Boys, with an ensign (flag), and one more who was only left alive, but much wounded, stood by the Major-General, and fell with

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[53] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.25.

[54] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, pp.381–382.

[55] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573. See also Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.159; Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.133.

[56] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.381.

> him. Boys, when he was so wounded that he perceived he wos slain, stripped off his colours, and wrapping himself in them, fell and died.[57]

With the vanguard of the army in full flight the leading regiment of the army's main body, being Venables' own, now felt the full force of the Spanish attack. Venables claims his regiment 'charg'd their Pikes' at the fleeing Jackson and forlorn hope in an attempt to 'keep them back' but it was futile. His regiment turned and fled running into Heane's own regiment immediately behind them who fled also.[58] Behind Heane's regiment was the Sea Regiment commanded by Goodsonn, and the seamen were made of sterner mettle than the soldiers that fled past them; it was Goodsonn's decisiveness that saved the English army from a total rout. Ordering his regiment forward the seamen advanced, Venables attached to its fore and 'with our Swords we forced the runaways into the Woods, rather choosing to kill them than they should rout us'.[59] Venables must have looked a pitiful sight if his own description of this intervention is to be believed, for he had been sick for two weeks and was very much weakened and could only move about 'except supported by two'.[60] The Spanish recoiled upon this stand, and by now also exhausted they were forced back, 'but were first wearied with killing'. The fighting had been ferocious, whilst the sheer heat of the day was having an effect on both friend and foe. The Sea Regiment, who were now supported by Buller and Fortescue's regiments, slowly advanced back along the road forcing the Spanish, now outnumbered, exhausted and their momentum spent, to retire, for 'to kill all the enemie and themselves die of exhaustion would have been a barbarous thing to do'.[61] One officer wrote 'After all this slaughter the enemie was beaten back by 4 files of well disciplined men.'[62] The guns from San Geronimo still fired when they could at the advancing English, but they 'gave them a severe fright, but did not kill many of them for the shots went high'.[63] Venables, however, was to later state on the contrary that 'the Enemy's Cannon from the Fort swept away our Men by eight or nine at a shot.'[64]

The Spanish rallied before the advancing English, having received reinforcements from the city, and even attempted to form another ambush with as many as 600 men at the city side of the clearing. As the English advanced they gave the Spaniards a ferocious volley which Pallano admitted 'it could be considered a miracle that they did not kill us all' and which was sufficient to force the Spanish backwards. The guns from San Geronimo seeing this English rally opened fire, which also had the desired effect of halting any English enthusiasm for advancing farther.[65] For a time the Spanish were convinced the English would attempt to storm the city that night, but Venables and his army were by now not in any condition to advance further that day. With night falling both sides were exhausted. The English held their ground on the far side of the clearing and as they regrouped it allowed the shakier soldiers amongst them the 'opportunity (with sorrow and shame) to look back on their miserable fellows, groaning with wounds, and weltering in blood'.[66] The author of the *Swiftsure Journal* even commented by now 'the men [were] in pretty good heart again',[67] whilst Barrington, always enthusiastic, commented that the 'officers of the army being very free and willing to require satisfaction from the enemy for the blood of our dear friends so lately spilt'.[68] The Spanish forces withdrew behind their fort and reformed at *Pozo del Rey*, while sporadic firing continued throughout the night between the English and the fort's artillery.[69]

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[57] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.90–91.

[58] Firth, (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.29; Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.57.

[59] Firth, (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.29; Penn, *Memorials*, p.89.

[60] Firth, (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.29.

[61] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.133; Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.24.

[62] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.133.

[63] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.25.

[64] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.29.

Once darkness, and the relative safety that it brought, had fallen, the English were able to take stock of their situation. Sources vary as to how many casualties they suffered; one mentions them to be 'no less than six-hundred men, besides two hundred more that crept into bushes, and were left behind in the woods, whom the negroes and Molattoes soon after dispatched ... There were also three-hundred wounded, whereof many were past recovery.'[70] Another claims that 'above 400 souldjers were slayne, many more wounded'.[71] The one Spanish source claims English prisoners informed them over 1,500 had been killed. The Spanish thought that the English had buried 500–600 men the following morning before they retreated and plus around 800 more that they left unburied.[72] Carvajal commented that the 'lancers exercised their muscles to such a good effect that they killed more than 800'.[73] Perhaps a figure of between of around 500–800 would be a fair estimate of the English dead, plus wounded. Barrington claims 'nigh 3000 were put to the route', close to half the army.[74] We shall never know what the true figure amounted to, but with the little medical help available and the general poor hygiene of the day many more will have died of their wounds within the next weeks and months. The casualties included many a good officer, one area in which this particular army was not well endowed, including Major General Heane. Other officers who became casualties of the day included Major Ferguson, Captains Hancock, Butler and Hinde of Venables' own regiment. To this list must be added most of the *reformadoes* and the firelocks, including their commander Captain Pawlett. In addition to these high casualties the army also lost many of its regimental colours. for 'The losse upon this defeate received was eight field colloures (five of the Generall's, one of the Major Generalls, and two reformed [reformardoe] colloures).'[75] Thoughts of gold and plunder were now far from the minds of these men. Dejected and weary, all they wanted now was to be gone from Hispaniola, the island which only a few weeks before had promised to be Ilyria.[76]

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[65] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.27.

[66] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.381.

[67] Penn, *Memorials*, p.89.

[68] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573.

[69] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.381; HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573; Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.27; HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573.

[70] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.381.

[71] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.57.

[72] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, pp.29, 30.

[73] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, pp.29, 30.

[74] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573.

The poor performance of the English soldiers and the rapid disintegration of the forlorn hope was much commented upon by the English eyewitnesses, with a sense of great shame. Much of the advance guard of the army simply ran as soon as they were attacked and made no attempt to fight. Despite Heane's valiant attempts to stem the rout and offer some resistance to the Spanish he was 'most unworthily and shamefully deserted by the soldiers ...but such was their vile cowardice and baseness of spirit, that not one man would do it.' Heane's sacrifice as he attempted to stop this rout illustrated that he was 'too worthy, indeed, to be a member of so antichristian an army'.[77] Those English 'that were of more valour and strength than others' and who would have fought, but like Heane 'were so overwhelmed, and trampled under foot (by the shameful flight of the multitude that were about them) and quickly fell prey unto the merciless enemy'.[78] Butler purportedly commented with contempt that the army had been 'shamefully repulsed by a small party of the enemy'.[79] Some saw the hand of God in this humiliating of defeats when 'the hand of the Almighty was much seen in the business, who struck so great a terror in their hearts, that they became the people of his wrath, fitted for destruction'.[80] Perhaps the greatest loss of all that day was the English morale. Defeated by fewer than 200 Spaniards the English army had been humiliated and were rightly ashamed of their performance that day. Their heart was now gone; defeated by the heat and stealth.

That night Venables ordered the mortar piece to be brought up and sited in front of San Geronimo, to batter it the following morning, whilst he dispatched under Major Bland '100 men out of each regiment commanded forth to march forward and to take possession of the ground wee had then left', with orders to remain there in anticipation of an attack upon the fort in the morning.[81] The mortar was placed 'within musquet-shot ... where the enemy could not bring any great gun to bear'. Pioneers hastily cut down trees to construct a makeshift breastwork and by early morning it was in 'readiness to do execution on the fort', according to one English officer.[82] Venables was to claim later that it was not sited correctly and so could not be brought into action,[83] but most of the English sources disagree and claimed that the mortar was ready by morning and so it was with a great deal of surprise that, instead of ordering the expected attack upon San Geronimo, Venables ordered the army to retreat for a second time to the River Hine.[84] According to Venables it had been decided the night before at a Council of War that if the mortar could not be sited before daybreak the army would need to withdraw 'lest we perish by thirst'. The Spanish heard that their English foes were active throughout the night 'firing at intervals. At midnight he fired another heavy volley and two field-pieces, and at dawn another volley, which we ascribed to fear.'[85] To create greater confusion some of the Spaniards placed lit match on the trees in front of the nervous English, who fired in that direction thinking it was a Spanish advance.[86]

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[75] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.57.

[76] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.133; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.159; Firth (ed.) *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.57; HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573.

[77] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.331.

[78] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.382.

[79] Penn, *Memorials*, p.88.

[80] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.382.

[81] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, pp.57–58.

[82] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.382.

According to Venables, as day broke the mortar had not been sited and was now coming under fire from the fort, with cannon balls falling 'within in some few Yards of the place, took Six, Seven, or Nine Men away at a Shot'. He had discussed the probability of having the mortar brought into action quickly and effectively with Hughes, the commander of the artillery, who was, according to both the general and John Daniel, of the opinion that it could not be fired from where it was sited. Hughes is reputed to have said that 'the fort had such comand over all those places, that wold beate them from it'.[87] For this reason the officers, again according to Venables, voted to retreat once again.[88] Perhaps a more adventurous commander than Venables would have found a way to site the mortar quickly and begin the attack. Certainly it was the opinion of most of the writers of the extant English narratives that an attack could have been made that morning, but they were not necessarily part of the decision-making process and those that were, apart from Venables, left no account of why they elected, if they even did, to retreat. Whether it was a collective decision or not, the decision to retreat was made, and with it the last chance of the English capturing San Domingo was lost. Venables made much in his later attempt to vindicate himself of the terrible thirst of the army due to their lack of water, but as Whistler rightly pointed out, Venables had arranged with Penn to land water close to San Geronimo on the day of the retreat. Whilst it would have proved risky to land this whilst San Geronimo was still in Spanish hands, he at least knew that water would be available once it fell.[89]

Despite the apparent confidence of some that the army was ready and capable of storming San Geronimo it is obvious that it was in a state of serious disorder. After spending an uncomfortable night in the open, the soldiers would once again have been short of water and probably food. With their confidence undermined by the second ambush and the flight of much of the army that it occasioned, many of the senior officers must have doubted their chances of success. As the army began to withdraw, a strong rearguard was deployed while the rest 'marched away in all manner of disorder', discarding weapons, food and other equipment as they went. Rather than return the mortar shells that they had carried with them the day before, the English simply buried them.[90] Whistler later wrote, 'Now many did curs inwardlie which durst not show it outwardlie' as the order to retreat was given.[91] Such was the nervous disposition of those eager to return to the comparative safety of the River Hine, that the retreating army descended into chaos when two African-Caribbeans were spotted on the banks of the river taking a drink, and the call went up that the Spanish were approaching. At which commotion many of the soldiers 'imediatly threw away their armes, and ran for it, some for feare lept into the river, whereof 3 were drowned, soe much were we cow'd and daunted'.[92] A party of soldiers were sent out to stabilise the situation and round up the panicked men, 'but not finding a man to fight withal were employed in bringing back the thrown away arms'. Such was the complete shattering of English morale by now, Barrington observed that 'our men's spirits were so cowed that in our after stay in that island we had not the common spirit of children, so metamorphosed were we'.[93]

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[83] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.30, 82, 98.

[84] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.98.

[85] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.28.

[86] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.58.

[87] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.507.

[88] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.98.

[89] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.159.

As day broke on 26 April the Spanish prepared to resist yet another advance. Convinced that San Geronimo would be stormed, reinforcements were dispatched there and yet another ambush was laid. Scouts reported the sound of digging coming from the English camp, but (remarkably) it was not until two o'clock in the afternoon that they seem to have been aware of the English retreat, when two prisoners confessed that the army had gone, and it was only then that the Spanish knew the enemy had quit the field. De Penalva ordered 200 men be dispatched to fall on the English rear, but espying their return into their so-recently vacated camp, the force returned, though at least able to pick off some of the stragglers.[94] In their pursuit of the retreating English they found 10 iron mortar shells 'bigger than water bottles' and the ground was littered with quantities of spades, hatchets, picks and shovels all 'abandoned to expedite flight'. The English attempted to destroy their mortar and it was found 'partly burned' along with many discarded pikes, broken and whole, muskets, carbines and even some burst drums. The battlefield was also littered with the English dead. The hastily dug English graves were not sufficient for all the bodies and piles of corpses, 40–50 in each were found heaped up, already decomposing and starting to smell.[95] As with the aftermath of the first ambush the Spanish were wary of the still numerous English forces and they remained on edge. That night a rumour quickly circulated around the city that the English were attacking again, this time at Boqueron, between *Pozo del Rey* and the city. The rumour had been started when a soldier at the Lenba Gate opened fire 'at a noise', which created further alarm, and more panic ensued when another soldier began shouting that the English had entered the city. 'This man had the phantasm of fear in his heart, and the fighting he should have done in reality, he did in his dreams.'[96] Nevertheless, the day and night after the defeat of the English the city of San Domingo remained on edge.

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[90] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.134.

[91] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.159.

[92] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.134; Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.58.

[93] HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573.

[94] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.29.

[95] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.30.

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[96] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.31.

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The Consequences

Once the English army had returned to the camp on the River Hine, blame for the defeat soon began to be apportioned. Adjutant General Jackson was made the immediate scapegoat by Venables for not posting any scouts to detect an ambush and for being the first man to flee.[1] A council of war was immediately called, at which Jackson, 'that great man of little courage',[2] was tried for cowardice. According to John Daniel, as soon as the ambush was launched he did 'most basely run away' and 'sneaktd into the bushes, like an old fox, and saved himself'.[3] He was charged with failing to search the woods for ambushes, it being his duty as commander of the forlorn; for carrying too few pikes with him (although, bearing in mind the overhanging branches, one would have thought pikes would only have been a hindrance); for placing himself at the rear of his command, and finally it was claimed that 'he was the first Man that was seen to run of the whole Party', when the ambush was sprung. Unanimously he was found guilty and instantly cashiered from the army, his sword broken over his head and 'made a Swabber to keep the Hospital Ship clean'. A light sentence indeed for so notorious an offender who had been accused of 'whoring and drunkenness' in Barbados. It was further alleged that 'he and a woman had previously been lodging in one Chamber together and not any other person with either, enough to enduce a belief that he was an Offender'. If these accusations were not enough it was further rumoured that he had two wives in England![4] A sergeant, possibly from Fortescue's regiment, was also tried for desertion, when in the second ambush he 'threw down his arms, crying out "Gentlemen shift for yourselves, we are all lost" and so ran away. He was hang'd with his fault written upon his breast.'[5]

Venables further blamed his own men for the rout. He was to later to describe some of the soldiers as 'so heartless that they only followed the Officers to charge, and there left them to dye', whilst some of the officers themselves he called 'nimble footed'. He added that no amount of 'entreaties, persuasions, reasons' were sufficient to prevail upon the soldiers to stay, even though they knew 'whither to run with safety'. He found the recruits from the West Indies as 'most fearful, being only bold to do mischief, not to be commanded as Souldiers, nor kept in any civil order'.[6] The other commissioners followed Venables' lead and blamed the soldiers in their letter to Searle dated 28 April when they noted, 'We are ashamed of the cowardice of our men, which yet continueth, and were not the enemy as cowardly as themselves, they might with a few destroy our Army'.[7] Whilst Venables and his officers were content to blame some of the soldiers for the defeat, others saw the hand of God in this humiliating of defeats when 'the hand of the Almighty was much seen in the business, who struck so great a terror in their hearts, that they became the people of his wrath, fitted for destruction.'[8] Barrington agreed and wrote 'in all this I look upon it as the heavy judgment of God fallen upon us justly for our miscarriages'.[9] Captain How believed that the failure of the expedition 'was Gods handy work for the Sins of the Nation, as also for our Sins who were very unfit Instruments for such a work, being for the most part such as were not Soldiers, and but few but such as were more than ordinary Wicked and debauch'd, and that not only private Soldiers but several Commanders also, which might justly provoke the Lord against us.'[10] Interestingly none of the English accounts, other than his own, even mention Venables' involvement during the second engagement. He claims he was at the head of the Sea Regiment when it advanced and saved the day, and that he later 'went from place to place as the Cannon [from San Geronimo] play'd to encourage the Men'. He also admitted that he 'had been troubled for a fortnight with a grievous Flux, which so weakened me (besides the pains of the day) that I could not go except supported by two'.[11] Whilst the absence of him being mentioned by any of the witnesses does not prove he was not active in commanding the army at the time, it could equally show that he did nothing that was noteworthy either. Venables did later recognise that the overconfidence of the English played a part in their defeat when he noted, 'But not to excuse ourselves wholly, we fear we did trust too much in the Arm of Flesh, having so great an Army as England never sent into these parts before; and indeed our Number in this Woody Country was our trouble, not strength.'[12]

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[1] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.29.

[2] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.383.

[3] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[4] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.33.

[5] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.34; Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

After identifying a few scapegoats, the army and the commissioners needed to decide what to do next. According to Venables' *Narrative* Penn, Winslow and Butler met aboard the *Swiftsure* on the night of 26 April to discuss it. The three met again the following day, but were still undecided.[13] The *Swiftsure Journal* confirms that both these meetings took place and that

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[6] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.30.

[7] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.31.

[8] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.382.

[9] HMC *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573.

[10] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.42.

[11] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.29.

[12] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.32.

[13] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, p.88.

Venables was not present. The journal expressly notes that Winslow and Butler were of the opinion that they should 'take in water, and away presently for Jamaica', whilst Penn 'seemed very resolute to withstand, but rather to make some further attempt on this place'.[14] Still undecided the three then went aboard the *Selby* where Venables was lodged. According to the well-informed Whistler the three commissioners proposed to Venables, 'to see if thay could gett them [the army] to march up once more'. To this Venables is said to have responded 'that it wose in vaine to talk any fourder [*sic*] of it, for he did resolve not to goe any more'.[15] According to Venables no further attempt upon San Domingo was possible as the officers had lost confidence in their men, who found it 'not safe to trust to their Courage, which they had Experienced to the loss of many of their fellows'. A suggestion which some of the officers 'offer'd to Regiment themselves, so to live and die together' in one more attempt was apparently refused by Winslow, in yet another apparent interference by the civilian commissioners.[16] Despite Penn's attempts to persuade Venables otherwise, and seemingly some officers in the army who 'did seme willing to goe againe with a partie of men which should be picked out of the Armie', Venables would not change his mind and wanted to withdraw.[17] If Whistler is to be believed Penn seems to have got angry at this point in the conversation with both Venables and with the poor conduct of the army, he being 'much ashamed of thayer basnis'. He was reported to have told Venables that 'ware it not for the sakes of sume that ware with them, he would set sayle and leave them: seeing thay ware so bace to desier to come of from this Gallant Illand, and to leave it with soe much shame and disgrace not onlie to themselves But to the Nation'.[18] Frustrated, Penn told Venables that he refused to send provisions ashore until his ships had taken on water and been refitted. He claimed, with more than a hint of sarcasm, that the army was on a plentiful island and that 'if they would not fight for it they should starve'.[19] According to the author of the *Swiftsure Journal* Penn had offered 'several times' to use the fleet in a more aggressive manner to subdue the city but to no avail as he perceived in the army a 'spirit dismayed, and that the officers were unwilling to trust themselves with such men'.[20]

Unable to convince Venables, the army and the other commissioners to try again, Penn had no choice to accept their decision, but this exchange damaged the relations between the army and the fleet even more. So later that day the commissioners, notably excluding Venables, wrote to Searle notifying him of their decision to evacuate the island having 'conferred with the Officers this day they all agree that these People [the army] will never be brought to March up to that place again' and that they would instead 'attempt Jamaica'.[21] Or, as Barrington wrote, 'It being thought requisite not to engage this army against the Hispaniolian any more, fearing it might prove of dangerous consequence (the hearts of our people being so much deadened through fear and sickness).'[22] The anonymous I.S. added that to have made a third attempt would be an 'act of no less rashness than madness', and even if the officers were 'valiant, able and worthy' then 'these sheeplike soldiers ... would questionless have left them in the lurch.'[23] Once upon Jamaica 'the sick and faint armie might rest a little and recruite aboard and not lye in the raine, it being of itselfe enough to wash away an armie'.[24]

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[14] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, p.88.

[15] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.159–160.

[16] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.34.

[17] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.160.

[18] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.160.

[19] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.160.

[20] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, p.93.

[21] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.30–31.

Needless to say the decision to evacuate was unpopular with many of the officers and men who still retained the will to fight. One naval office was of the opinion that 'if but 2000 or 1500 good men were picked out of the 7000 yet remaining' the cause would not be lost. The fleet was able to batter the city and its defences into submission whereby 'clear[ing] the way for those men to [take] the town.'[25] These were sentiments no doubt shared by many of the soldiers. The same naval officer, appreciating the larger political and strategic consequences such a retreat would entail, was concerned of the reputation of England abroad when he wrote:

> that there might be a great more in the bowels of this disgrace, if we should go off defeated, without seeing an enemy, than could be imagined, as to the peace and welfare of England; in regard the news hereof dispersing itself over Europe, through the Spanish hands, would render the business so hugely ugly, that it might give occasion for every foreign prince to trample on us, and lay hold on the opportunity to bring us low.[26]

However, notwithstanding the likely political fallout, the decision was made to evacuate.

With the decision made, and as a preliminary to the evacuation, on 30 April Penn dispatched the *Selby* and *Grantham* to ply off the coast of Hispaniola for 'the space of four or five week ... for prevention of any of the ships, which might come hither to us, from going in and falling into the hands of the enemy; but should direct all that should come, to fall down after us to Jamaica.' Furthermore any such vessels were instructed to 'repair away for England' if they found that the fleet was itself not at Jamaica.[27] Both the *Selby* and the *Grantham* followed these orders and eventually rejoined the fleet of Jamaica on 20 June, along with three Spanish 'small vessels, prizes' that had ventured out of San Domingo after the English had departed and had been seized.[28]

Also dispatched was the vessel *Adventure* to Barbados with a letter from Penn, Winslow and Butler for the island's governor and fellow commissioner

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[22] HMC *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573.

[23] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.383.

[24] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.134.

[25] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, p.92.

[26] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, p.92.

[27] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, pp.91–92.

[28] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.388.

Daniel Searle, knowing full well that his letter and its contents, dated 28 April, would probably be the first news of the disaster to be received in England, as Penn had ordered that the *Adventure* sail for England after calling in at Barbados. The letter, whilst in no way critical of Venables himself, certainly laid blame for the defeat on the quality of the army, with the men Barbados and St. Christopher drawing the ire of the commissioners. It began: 'We are ashamed of the cowardice of our men, which yet continueth, and were not the enemy as cowardly as themselves, they might with a few destroy our Army.' They wrote that the army 'will not be brought to go on again ... and to say the truth your Men and the Men of St. Christophers lead all the disorder and confusion.' Short of specifics as to what happened (in fact at this early stage the commissioners aboard the fleet had little detail of the events that had just taken place) they continued that the officers of the army 'all agree that these People will never be brought to March up to that place again' and that they had decided (perhaps even without Venables' approval) 'to attempt Jamaica in the next place'. They desired Searle to 'send our Stores thither'. They concluded 'Time will not permit us to tell you of every particular, nor to set out the worth of our General [Venables], how he sought by all Means to stop the base flight of our Men, and how our Men ... fell down upon their March, some dying with thirst upon the place ... Thus you see our sad condition.'[29] When this letter was received by Searle is not known but seemingly not by 1 June, when he wrote to Oliver Cromwell and made it clear he had received no news from the fleet since its departure at the end of March.[30]

Despite this letter from the commissioners to Searle and the account given by both Whistler and the *Swiftsure Journal*, which all clearly state the decision to evacuate was made before the end of April, there is some evidence that hints that perhaps Venables did in fact have second thoughts about making another attempt on the city. A letter written from Penn to Venables on 2 May suggests that Venables might have changed his mind and that he still harboured the intention of making a third attempt. In this letter Penn wrote 'I therefore do desire, that *if you perceive no further attempt is to be made by the army*[31] on this place ... that they must be shipped off, that it be done with all speed.' It is not clear if this letter was actually sent to Venables, as it was reported in the *Swiftsure Journal* that Penn pocketed the letter and so it might not have been sent at all.[32] This letter implies that, for Venables at least, there was still the notion that the army might undertake another attempt on the city. If Venables was still considering this, foolhardy as the notion was by now with the army disintegrating around him, it might explain why it took until 3 May before the army was embarked, not immediately after the decision was made on 27 April. Once the decision was made to evacuate it would make no sense to then remain in the camp for another week, especially as food was scarce and the Spanish were beginning to press around the perimeter of the encampment. Perhaps the fleet needed this time to load water and that caused the delay, but perhaps it was caused by further indecision from Venables who was becoming increasingly unable to make the necessary command decisions expected of him. The fact that Penn seems to have chosen to withhold a letter dictated by him to Venables further hints at the disunity amongst the commissioners that was to spread once Jamaica was occupied. In fact so wide was the rift between them now that when Venables met with Penn 29 April, where, according to Penn, he expressly asked for Penn's assurance that the fleet would stand by the army and 'not take off the sea-regiment'. Venables acknowledged it was that regiment that had saved the army from destruction but that he had heard of Penn's intent to withdraw the regiment after their stormy meeting of the previous day. Penn, in reply, said that he 'promised to stand by them'.[33]

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[29] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.30–31.

[30] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.499.

[31] Author's italics.

[32] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, p.95.

Whatever the reason for the delay in the evacuation, the army suffered miserably as a result of it in its camp next to the River Hine. For the next six days it lay by the river 'in which time we endured much hardship', for much of its provisions were lost in the rout. It rained daily as well, making conditions for the English intolerable.[34] Once de Penalva discovered their perilous condition, he constantly sent out patrols to harry any foraging parties that ventured forth, which were easily attacked 'for want of our men's fighting many of them were cut of', and many were killed.[35] As a result of these attacks fear soon swept through the demoralised English ranks and many refused to leave the camp to go in search of food, and as Whistler put it, they would 'rather starve than … goe out of thayer quarters but one mile'.[36] One group of 30 were killed in the 'ploughed field' at de Mieses' sugar mill where many an Englishman had already lost his life.[37] Such was the nervousness of the soldiers that when they encountered the Spanish, '10 of the enemie would usually cause 100 of ours to flie, and leave their officers to be killd, soe great a feare a terrour did God strike into the hearts of our men.'[38] Even when some did go out they were so scared of being attacked by the Spanish that in their haste to return it was not uncommon for them to be careless when hunting cattle, firing upon their own men 'soe that 16 fell in one day after this heedlesse manner'.[39] Consequently the starving soldiers fell to eating dogs, asses, not to mention poisonous fruits and even horse flesh if a trooper 'were not nimbell' when he tied up his mount. Many of the horses were killed and then eaten by the soldiers, as the horseflesh was 'a greate delicate [*sic*]'.[40] According to Venables so desperate were some of the men for food they willingly ate poisonous fruit rather than starve.[41] It was hardly surprising, then, that in these confined conditions, full of sickly, starving men who were lying in a sodden camp exposed to the tropical elements, that dysentery, the 'bluddie fluxe', quickly spread, incapacitating much of the army, reducing many men to a sad and sorry state from which many died. Barrington claimed that by the time of the evacuation, 'I can assure you that we had not one man of twenty (both officers and soldiers) that stood in health.'[42] On a more humorous note Daniel commented during these days that 'Some women [were] found in mens apparel [and] were punisht, and all suspected whores (Barbados and those plantations yeilding fewe else) [were] narrowly sought after.'[43]

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[33] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, pp.91, 94.

[34] Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal', p.14.

[35] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.134.

[36] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.160.

[37] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), Spanish Narratives, in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.58.

[38] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.134.

[39] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.134.

[40] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.135.

In such a depressed state the English, understandably, became extremely nervous and their imaginations prone to overtake them, and thus a whole series of alarms were raised when it was believed that the Spaniard was attacking. Upon the beach there was an abundance of 'Great Crabes' which emerged from their burrows by night to feed at the water line. Unfortunately in doing so 'they will hit the one leges against the other ... like the ratling of Bandaleares, sume of them English soldiers did lep into the sea for feare that it had abin the Cow Killers.'[44] The English were further alarmed by the appearance of large fireflies at night that resembled a 'cole of fier' and which the nervous guards thought to be the lit match of approaching Spaniards, at which they fired creating further alarm within the army, leading many to 'run unto the wodes for fear it wose the Cow killers and the Nedgors come upon them.'[45] Such was the panicked disposition of the English army.

The position of Venables and his army was rapidly becoming untenable, being hemmed in on three sides of the sea, scorched by a hostile sun and too frightened even to leave the safety of their own camp. Eventually the evacuation began on 2 May, but prior to this the distrust between the army and the fleet manifested itself once again when the army officers refused to allow the Sea Regiment to go aboard first, lest the fleet sail without the rest of the army, leaving them devoid of 'food, Ammunition, Medicaments, or any necessaries, to be given up to the mercy of the Enemy'.[46] Even after the army was once again aboard there were some in the fleet who could not hide their disdain and contempt for the soldiers whose poor performance reflected upon the entire expedition. Rear Admiral George Dakins, a well-known Anabaptist and a vocal critic of the religious views of the government, could not contain himself when he sarcastically asked the soldiers 'where are there cowardly Spaniards now?' He helped perpetuate the rumour that the fleet would abandon the army when he openly declared that the Spaniards could come and take the 'army rogues, that we may noe more bee troubled with them'. Daniel, himself 'weake and soe ill nott able to stand' was told to his face by an officer under Dakins that 'wee were all over-bord, that they might be rid of us againe'.[47] This was, of course, highly unlikely to happen but it further illustrates open rift between the land and the sea forces and the distrust of the army. In an attempt to pacify the army once aboard the fleet, Penn felt it necessary to instruct his captains to ensure equal treatment between the men of the two services on board ship when he insisted that the soldiers be given equal rations as the sailors 'in all respects' and that one pint of brandy be shared between 10 men daily, again for both soldier and seaman.[48]

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[41] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.35.

[42] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.35; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.160; HMC *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573.

[43] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506.

[44] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.160–161.

[45] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.161.

[46] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.35.

The army was completely re-embarked by the following morning, leaving behind 1,700 bodies, as one commentator dryly noted, along with 'all their honours, if any they had'.[49] Most of the horses had been killed on the shore, there being no provisions on board the fleet for them, although it was claimed that they had cost many thousands of pounds. These were 'brave English horses' capable, no doubt, of having 'marched from one side of any Spanish island in America to the other'.[50] One witness described the pathetic appearance of the soldiers who were 'in a most sad and lamentable condition, having never seen men soe altered in soe small a time.'[51] As the fleet departed on the evening of 4 May 1655 an enormous sense of failure must swept through the English, with one:

> Lammenting every time we did louck on this Illand, that it should bee saide that wee Englishmen should leaue such an Iland soe baslie as wee did leaue this: Our Gennerall [Penn] being all most choked for want of venting and telling the Armie of thayer Basnis: But he thoght it wisdom rather to be silant, and to giue them all the Incorraidgment he could, lest thay should doue the like whar we ware goeing.[52]

Spanish sources indicate that after the second English retreat to the River Hine, de Penalva and his officers had no idea what the next English move would be. Still fearing a third march on the capital more defensive works were dug, whilst two pieces of ordnance were dispatched to the field army. At the same time a small force was directed across the River Hine to blockade the English from the west. According to Carvajal this force engaged, and defeated, a force of English at San Gregorio de Nigua that was out foraging.[53] This move, added to the constant attacks on small foraging parties, did much to effectively contain the English in their beachhead. Numerically inferior as the Spanish were, they were waging an effective defensive war, whilst not daring to attack in force, as it was believed that the English were not yet beaten. By denying the invader the opportunity of collecting provisions from the surrounding country, the English were slowly being starved. Constant ambushes kept them in their camp, whilst the nearby farms and sugar mills were occupied and wells poisoned or blocked. For the English, morale by now broken and starving, it was only a matter of time before self-preservation necessitated their re-embarkation. Nonetheless the Spanish remained on edge when rumours spread that the English were advancing again.[54]

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[47] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.507.

[48] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, p.97; Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal', p.15.

[49] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.383.

[50] HMC *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573; Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.135.

[51] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.134.

[52] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.161.

[53] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.59.

Slowly the Spanish alarm abated once it was realised that their enemy was in no condition to attempt a third hazardous march on San Domingo. Prisoners confirmed what their scouts had reported about the English condition, that privation and disunity were rife. These prisoners spoke of casualties far beyond their expectations and that soon they would vacate Hispaniola. Throughout 2 May Spanish scouting patrols had reported that 'in his encampment the enemy remained, with his flags flying as usual'. However, later in the day, reports started to be received that 'the enemy was embarking in great haste. There were many such reports – dreamed and imagined.'[55] Upon hearing the news and sensing an opportunity to inflict more carnage on the English, de Penalva ordered a force of around 200 men, under captains don Juan Morfa Geraldino, don Juan de la Vega Torralba and 'the two brothers Garabito', be sent to 'prick the enemy in the croup as he embarked'.[56] However, upon their arrival at the camp they found the English had gone and what they found instead were the vestiges of a once proud but now defeated English army. They rounded up the 15–20 horses that the English had not killed before they left and found 'many Englishmen dead on Jayna [Hine] beach, who had come out of the battle wounded, and others who had died of sickness, for the post of Jayna is most unhealthy. Further, they ate roasted yucca, *guayigas* and *mayas*, all of which are poisonous. They found many graves and a great hole in a rock full of dead men. Also a piece of iron ordnance, which had been left ashore. But not all the English army had managed to get away: a Genoese youth, two young English boys and a lame Irishman found at the beach advised the Spanish that the English intention 'was to go to Jamaica'.[57]

As the English fleet sailed away relief spread throughout San Domingo, but nonetheless the Spaniards were still wary of the damage they might still cause, as Pallano enunciated when he wrote, 'Some thought that out of spite they would give the masons of the city work to do, with their cannon balls, but they left so hard run and hungry that they had not the breath for this.'[58] Still fearing that the English were not gone for good, de Penalva continued to strengthen the city defences, while he also sent a small force under Captain Fragoso to 'march down the coast as far as Azua, not losing sight of the fleet. This to know what course it kept, and, if it landed men to seek victuals, to prevent them from obtaining the same, punishing them.'[59] He also sent messengers to Jamaica and the other local Spanish territories to advise them of what had happened on Hispaniola, and of the English intentions as they knew them. In the days and weeks after the English army had departed, the Spanish frequently saw English ships off the Hispaniola coast.[60] These were the *Selby* and the *Grantham*, ordered by Penn to search for any English shipping heading for Hispaniola with supplies and to redirect them on to Jamaica. On 11 May the Spanish saw one of their own vessels being chased by three English ships across San Domingo bay. The Spanish vessel was run ashore just below the River Hine in an attempt to escape. Troops from the Spanish force that had reoccupied the small fort at the mouth of the River Hine were sent 'to relieve this vessel, and prevent the enemy from taking it, and to save its cargo. This measure was successful, for some part of the cargo was saved and is being brought up to the city. The vessel sank, and the enemy was not permitted to get possession of it.'[61]

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[54] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, pp.31–32; Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.59.

[55] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.33.

[56] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.59.

[57] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*,, pp.33–34; Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, pp.59–60.

[58] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.34.

Back on Hispaniola the Spanish were jubilant, and to celebrate what was deemed to be a miracle of God the Count de Penalva marched his victorious troops through the streets of San Domingo. The army entered the city 'to thank God, our Lord, and His most blessed Mother for so great a victory'. Upon this all the city's ordnance 'saluted from the slaughterhouse fort and from the tranversals of the wall' to which the army replied with small shot. The Count and his officers entered the cathedral, welcomed by the archbishop and his dean and chapter and where *Te Deum Laudamus* were sung. The Count 'gave thanks to the Lord of Hosts, our Redeemer and Creator, and all the army did likewise. In the rear the Lutheran banners trailed in the dust, as trophies.' The army marched from the cathedral to the Count's residence, where 'on the balcony of the which the Countess appeared, to whom we paid due honour as military art prescribes of such quality, lowering lancers from the shoulder and, discharging the firearms'.[62] De Penalva, writing to King Philip less than two weeks after the English had departed, stated:

> The victory was great and miraculous. I shall always believe that it was miraculous … It is not possible that I should have achieved this victory except by Divine Grace, obtained on intercession of the Virgin, Our Lady, who desired to punish these infidels, since they came on profaning hermitages, mutilating their crosses and saints, waging war by fire and sword, using clipped bullets out which they bit pieces, and advertising that they came to attack our holy Catholic faith, as certain prisoners have deposed.[63]

In reward for the loyal services of his garrison of Hispaniola, King Philip IV, 'great monarch of the Spains and lord of two worlds', ordered a solemn festival to be held annually on the anniversary of the English withdrawal, and on that date 500 pesos were to be distributed to the poor of the city 'in token of appreciation of the victory his majesty's arms won over those of England'. Additionally the heroes of the fight against the English were rewarded. Captains Damien del Castillo, Don Alvaro Garabito and Luis Lopez Tirado were to be awarded 300 ducats yearly. Other officials were similarly rewarded: 600 pesos were granted to the 300 lancers of the garrison, 'for the valour they displayed', while all 'officers and men of the Santo Domingo garrison, who served on the said occasion, one escudo each, over and above the pay drawn at the time', was also granted.[64] The Spanish losses were minimal – 25 dead and as many more wounded, one observer claimed.[65]

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[59] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.61.

[60] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.61.

[61] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.61.

[62] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.35.

[63] Count de Penalva, 'Count Penalva's Report to Secretary Leguia', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.48.

As Hispaniola rejoiced at her victory, the English mourned their dead. The tropical conditions, a lack of adequate provisions, sickness and battle casualties had done much to thin the ranks of Venables' army. From the moment the soldiers landed the terrific heat had taken its toll. The sun and the forced marches, made necessary by the location of the landing place, did much to sap the strength of the English soldiers, most of whom were far from physically fit before they even left their native land, let alone after the rigours of their journey. Thirst started to kill some of the soldiers within days of their arrival. The English soldiery quickly became susceptible to tropical diseases whilst the consumption of poorly cooked food and poisonous fruits accelerated the decline in their overall health. Disease appeared in the overcrowded camp on the River Hine after the army's first rebuff before San Domingo, and escalated rapidly during their second stay there. These cramped conditions, with non-existent sanitation and poor diet, were aggravated by the tropical rains which led to an outbreak of dysentery. Despite Lambert's warning such conditions had seemingly not been anticipated before the expedition set sail, even though it had been the aim of the committee to provide advice on such matters given some of its members first-hand experiences of the West Indies and North America.

English sources are vague and confusing regarding the total number of casualties. Venables later claimed that his total losses on Hispaniola were 'not above Seven hundred'.[66] Another English source notes the army lost 'about 1,000 men',[67] whilst Barrington suggests a similar figure.[68] The anonymous I.S. was to claim the figure to be as high as 1,700.[69] During the first engagement the English lost relatively few soldiers as a result of the fighting, perhaps around 100 but during the second ambush they lost as many as 800 men with many of the wounded dying later. To these must be added the deaths from thirst, sickness and from the isolated attacks upon the English foraging parties, perhaps another 500 casualties. So total losses must have amounted to approximately 1,400 throughout the entire duration of the campaign on the island. Undoubtedly more died after their departure from sickness, Winslow being the most notable, and many who died within the first few weeks upon their arrival in Jamaica died as a result of the illness they contracted upon Hispaniola.[70] Therefore total losses incurred by the army as result of their involvement before San Domingo would have been immeasurably greater than 1,400.

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[64] Pallano, 'The Pallano Relation', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.35; Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.60; Wright,(ed) *Spanish Narratives*, pp.Appendix A 68–70.

[65] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.60.

[66] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.97.

[67] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.135.

[68] HMC *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573.

[69] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.383.

Some of the wounded English did survive and were able to return to England. John Ginger was granted 3*l* 10s on 15 September 1656 (he was a sergeant in Major Mercer's company of Venables' own regiment). Sergeant James Pinkernell was granted 21*l* 3s 2d at the same time for his relief, Bryan Hodgson 'who was also wounded at Hispaniola' was given 21*l* 10s 10d whilst Anthony Scales was shot and lost an eye there. Thomas Howard, William (?) Luke and George Shorland were all captured on the island and transported to Spain, but were found on board some of the Spanish vessels Blake attacked at Santa Cruz in April 1657 and released. Unfortunately we do not know the extent of these men's wounds nor how these impacted the rest of their lives.[71]

Spanish casualties are even harder to establish. One source claims as few as 25 killed and wounded.[72] A figure of 100, dead and wounded, seems excessive, though all factors considered, the figure cannot have been much less than this.

The English lost many a good officers upon Hispaniola. The death of Richard Heane was a severe blow to the army, as both English and Spanish sources lament. Of Venables' own regiment Captains Disney, Hancocke, Butler and Hinde did not survive the disaster, whilst Lieutenant Colonel Clarke was to die at sea in May from wounds received on the island. The list continues. Adjutant General Butler was killed on 18 April, and Captain Allen, the scout, was killed soon after the landing. Major Ferguson of Carter's regiment was also killed, and Samuel Leverington, a captain under Fortescue, was also to die from wounds received. In addition to these, hundreds more of their fellow soldiers were to lie in unmarked graves, including the brave *reformadoes*, slain while attempting to stem the Spanish onslaught.[73]

Whilst the English attack upon Hispaniola was an unmitigated disaster, the decision to attack that island in particular was sound. With San Domingo being the principle Spanish city and port along the islands facing the mainland it was a logical starting point for the English as they looked to conquer further Spanish territory. It could be used as base to provide provisions for the English forces and its secure harbour would allow the fleet to dominate the Caribbean Sea to the south. Sir Francis Drake had demonstrated in 1586 that with sufficient forces the city could be taken. So whilst the decision to select Hispaniola as the place to attack first made strategic sense the planning was marked by a litany of mistakes, errors and blunders.

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[70] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.383.

[71] TNA, SP25/77, f.398.; TNA, CO1/32, f.56.; TNA, SP25/78, f.683.

[72] Carvajal, 'The Notorial Account', in Wright (ed.), *Spanish Narratives*, p.60.

[73] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.116–122.

Despite Spanish dominance throughout the West Indies the English had been settled in numerous locations across the region for many decades, and their vessels had frequently sailed the seas there, and so there was a breadth of personal experience of the conditions that the expedition was likely to face upon which the organisers could draw upon. Gage had extensive personal experience of South America while Modyford was specifically asked for his ideas, based on his personal experiences as a settler in Barbados. Winslow had extensive personal knowledge of the struggles that fledgling settlements were likely to encounter from his time in New Plymouth. The members of Riccard's committee had much commercial experience of funding, equipping and managing trading expeditions to the Caribbean, though only a few of them had personal experience of the place. Given that the English had prior knowledge of the environment into which they were venturing forth, particularly of the climate and the difficulties that it presented, it seems incredible that that expedition was so unprepared for the conditions that Venables was to face on Hispaniola.

The greatest single underestimation of the English was to be the effects of the climate, both in terms of the heat and subsequent need for large quantities of drinking water, but also how it affected the spread of disease. Despite all of the collective experience of those involved with the planning, there is not a single reference to ensuring that sufficient drinking water was to be made available for the English forces once they landed in Hispaniola. Whilst one of Riccard's suggestions mentioned the need to carry water bottles there are no surviving records to show that any were issued in England prior to the departure of the expedition. Perhaps the first, and most obvious, distinction that any visitor from the milder climes of western Europe would notice when they arrived in the West Indies is the heat and subsequent dehydration that followed, which is only magnified with physical exertion, with temperatures varying little between 75°F (24°C) and 83°F (28°C). That none of the experts consulted seem to have identified the obvious consequences of a lack of water is startling. Whilst the fleet always needed to carry sufficient drinking water for a voyage, and certainly carried enough water with it whilst at sea in the West Indies, no thought was given to how the army would carry water whilst on land. Presumably it was assumed that water was plentiful on the islands of the West Indies and so the army could obtain it as they found it, but still no provision was made to carry it in the sufficient quantities required. After the first English retreat to the River Hine the Spanish found some small water casks and barrels that the English had dropped during their retreat, and so they did have at least the capacity to carry some water with them. The soldiers were able to create personal water containers from the hollowed-out shells of calabashes, but certainly these were not enough for the needs of the army.[74] Nearly all the English sources bemoan the lack of water and the effects that thirst had upon the army, within only a day or so of the landing. The lack of water directly affected the ability of the army to function and perform as the men became faint, weak, demoralised and dehydrated. Venables blamed the lack of water for the necessity of retiring to the River Hine on both occasions and by doing so he also lost the tactical initiative against the Spanish, which he was never able to regain. The thirst encountered by the soldiers diminished their strength and made them more susceptible to the diseases that afflicted them, which was exasperated by their constant drinking of fresh orange juice to sate their appetites but which also led to sickness. Whilst the lack of water was not the only cause of the English failure, it was a significant one.

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[74] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.506; Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.96.

Another issue that seems to have been overlooked was the impact that tropical diseases would have amongst the soldiers. Perhaps the common denominator amongst all the English colonial efforts in the Americas prior to 1655 (and even well afterwards) was the high mortality rate brought about by sickness and disease. The early colony of Jamestown in Virginia was almost wiped out by disease, and the New Plymouth colony had barely survived its first appalling winter, as Winslow knew from his personal experience. Barbados had demonstrated the high mortality rate suffered by the English settlers in the West Indies and this must have been known to many of the members of Riccard's committee, many of whom had personal experience of the problems faced by the Providence Island Company colonists. Even if the English did not fully understand the causes of the diseases that always seemed to afflict their colonial ventures, they were very aware of the probability that disease would take its toll once they landed on Hispaniola. With minimal comprehension of how diseases were spread, there was little that the English could do to prevent the outbreak of disease and it soon spread on Hispaniola, further incapacitating the army and undermining morale. Undoubtedly the overcrowded conditions and poor sanitation in the camp of the River Hine, as well as poor food and weak bodies, created the environment through which disease quickly spread and which rapidly diminished the numbers of effective soldiers the English could muster. This was not helped by the English unwittingly eating many of the poisonous fruits that grew on the island. Whilst Venables can be blamed for many of the mistakes that led to the English defeat, it would be unfair to blame him for the lack of understanding that the English had of disease prevention.

Venables was to later blame his failure on, amongst other things, the lack of provisions from England. Whilst it is true that many of the supply ships were delayed and their cargoes were not available to him on Hispaniola, it is important to not exaggerate the effects of this. He personally blamed Desborough for his poor provisioning of the expedition, and the rush to dispatch it, but both he and Penn played an important role in this and so can both be equally blamed for any shortcomings. Even though both fleet and army were on short rations after departing Barbados, food was available to the army after it landed and so it did not starve, although the poor quality and quantity of it necessarily impacted the stamina and resilience of the individual soldiers. Venables also blamed the poor equipment of the army for the defeat on Hispaniola. Whilst the quality of the equipment was in many cases poor, it was not the quality of the equipment that led to the English defeat, it was more the poor performance of the officers and men when engaged with the enemy. The lack of brandy to fortify the soldiers' spirits certainly impacted the morale of the men, with Venables to claim 'Our men die daily for want of it.'[75] The lack of tents did lead to serious repercussions as the men slept out in the open, which was not too bad on the march from Nisao but once they were encamped on the River Hine the rains started and the men became sodden, miserable and feverish as their resistance to disease and illness rapidly diminished. Venables clearly admits that the army has no tents in Hispaniola,[76] though he states in a letter from Jamaica in June that tents were aboard the supply ships that had so far failed to materialise.[77]

Certainly some of the difficulties the English encountered on Hispaniola were as a result of poor planning, but it would be discreditable to say that the English failure on Hispaniola was solely due to this; once Hispaniola was reached tactical blunders compounded with these, which collectively led to the disaster. The most glaring mistake made by Venables seems to have been his complete lack of formulating a realistic plan to capture San Domingo. Other than deciding that the city was his objective and that he would land at the River Hine (as Drake had done) with a diversion to the east of the city, he seems to have had no further plan. There seems to have been no co-ordination with Penn as to what the fleet would do to assist once Venables had landed. Penn landed provisions on this own initiative on 17 April and the following day he wrote to Venables offering the assistance of the fleet should the general think it necessary to attack San Geronimo, both of which suggest a lack of a co-ordinated plan, or at least a lack of understanding of what each was required to do. When Venables landed at Nisao he had neither ladders nor artillery with him, which implies that ifhe had landed at the River Hine as planned he would not have had them there either. That carriages for the artillery needed to be provided from different vessels when they were finally landed after 18 April, also suggests that no arrangements had been made for landing them when Venables first went ashore. Quite how he was expecting to storm the city walls without either is not known. He also seems to have made no prior reconnaissance of the landing site or approach to the city, as Drake had done and what Goodsonn did on his later raids along the Spanish Main. Once ashore Venables seems to not have grasped the importance of scouting ahead (hence falling into two ambushes) and if the anonymous I.S. can be believed, even when Venables planned to take a circuitous route to the north of the city on the second attempt his scouts failed to locate the road.[78] Venables' lack of appreciation of the capabilities, and limitations, of the fleet are also apparent. He seems to have viewed the fleet purely as a transport for his army and supplies whilst not considering the benefit of its greatest asset – that of providing a mobile artillery platform which could have been used against the city to support his assault. In fact there is evidence to suggest he specifically refused to allow the fleet to bombard the city, a point Winslow is said to have confirmed.[79] In fact despite this option being discussed by Venables and Penn at the time, Fortescue (the most senior army officer since the death of Heane) is reported to have said he had never heard that this option was even discussed until after the fleet departed Hispaniola 'when it was too late'.[80] Venables' failure to understand the limitations of where the fleet could safely disembark him led to further difficulties when he landed, forcing him to Nisao and a long march back to the River Hine. Goodsonn was probably justified in refusing to land at the River Hine when the time came, as he did not know the depth of the water and so it would have been folly to risk grounding his vessels without undertaking a prior reconnaissance of the landing site (as Drake had done). That Buller was later landed there demonstrated it was possible, but nonetheless dangerous, as was shown when the longboats encountered difficulty approaching the beach to land supplies. His initial plan, if it could really be called such, seems to have been as unimaginative as replicating exactly what Drake had done and hoping that it worked again.

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[75] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.49.

[76] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.32.

[77] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.48.

[78] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.381.

[79] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, p.96.

Once landed, Venables' limitations as a commander were soon exposed to the detriment of the army. He constantly failed to correctly read the tactical situation, such was giving up the ground and advantage he had won on the night after the first ambush. From that moment on he gifted the initiative to the Spanish, allowing them to control all the terrain outside of the city walls for the rest of the time the English were on the island. If he had realised the advantage he held that night he might have successfully assaulted the city the following day, but would have needed the assistance of the fleet which had not been planned for. He did at least realise the importance of San Geronimo in defending any attack against the western walls of the city. The Spanish had built this after Drake's raid to specifically stop any future repeat attack, which is exactly what the unimaginative Venables attempted to do. Venables seems to have had no clear answer of how to circumvent the fort and seems to have dithered between attacking it head on or bypassing it completely and attacking from the north on his second march on the city. He certainly did not do the most obvious thing, which was to batter it into submission from the sea. Venables must also be blamed for tarrying too long after his first retirement to the River Hine. He initially intended to rest the army for a few days, but stayed there for six, during which the Spanish became emboldened and strengthened whilst at the same time dominating the terrain up to the very edges of the English camp, denying them freedom of movement and easy foraging. The English however became sick and demoralised during this unnecessarily long rest period. Had Venables refreshed and reorganised in a few days he might well have been able to retake the initiative, had he formulated a plan likely to succeed. After the second ambush he once again tarried too long in the overcrowded and by then squalid camp before re-embarking. His dispirited army was in no position to defend itself, let alone attempt a third march on the city, so there was nothing to be gained in keeping it ashore, at the risk of attack from the Spanish whilst becoming more and more enfeebled through disease and sickness. Had Venables been more decisive he might have saved much of the army from the illness that racked it in Hispaniola and then decimated it in Jamaica.

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[80] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, p.98.

Venables also made many questionable decisions, which all had an impact on the eventual English defeat. He played no personal role during the first ambush until the situation had already been stabilised, despite being personally present at the front of the army. During the second attempt on the city his poor choice of commander of the advance guard led to the rout of part of the army. If Jackson was as notorious as Venables claimed him to be then the general should never have appointed him to command such a critical formation, not when he had many more experienced junior officers who had a proven military record, such as Archbould or Bowers, both of whom had commanded companies since 1642. His aloof manner and unwillingness to consult with his other senior officers did much to alienate them from him and which led to their disbelief when he insisted on retreating the River Hine twice. It is not surprising that Venables believed the officers were to later plot against him in Jamaica. His reputation with the soldiers was further impeded by his decision to stay aboard the fleet with his wife rather than endure the discomfort that they faced ashore. The English had an arrogant overconfidence in their own abilities, based on their national superiority complex over the Spanish, but which was magnified by Venables' own arrogance and which was amply demonstrated by the arguments had over the forthcoming spoils even before they landed. Venables did much that was wrong on Hispaniola and which led to the English defeat, but undoubtedly the Spanish themselves contributed in equal manner to this defeat.

The Spanish had learned well from the humiliation of Drake's raid in 1586. The construction of fort San Geronimo ahead of the main city walls effectively covered any attack from the west of the city, forcing an invader to either capture it first or bypass the western side of the city completely and attack from the north. Given that the River Hine was the only suitable landing place close to the city, any invader would always find the fort a major obstacle, and it is no surprise that de Penalva reinforced it as soon as he was aware of the impending attack. The very existence of the fort gave the defenders an advantage and one that Venables was unable to counter. Its overwhelming limitation was its proximity to the sea, from which it could be bombarded at will, but luckily for the Spanish the English commanders were unable to take advantage of this. The newly arrived Spanish governor, the Count de Penalva, proved himself to be competent, confident, imaginative and intelligent, in fact he was everything that Venables was not, and he certainly was not the stereotypical lazy, sinful Spaniard that Gage portrayed. Upon his arrival, well informed of the rumours of possible English attack, he immediately strengthened the city defences and reorganised the garrison. Willing to seek the advice of those who knew the area better than he did, he quickly grasped the realities of the tactical situation much better than Venables did. He posted a strong guard on the River Hine to disrupt any landing there, but was flexible enough to react quickly and send a force towards Nisao once he was made aware of the landing there. He desperately needed intelligence on English numbers and intentions which he got within a day of their landing, after which he could deploy his forces accordingly, unlike Venables, who was never able to grasp the strength of his opponent. Acutely aware that he was significantly outnumbered, de Penalva was intelligent enough to not risk an engagement in the open, and he openly admonished his officers when Mantilla attacked the English camp on 20 April, incurring unnecessary casualties. Controlling the tactical situation, when he chose to attack it would be on his terms and at a place of his choosing. Heavily outnumbered during both ambushes he was able only to disrupt the English advance before being forced to retire, but that was enough to demoralise the attackers and force their later withdrawal. He showed his mastery of the tactical situation when he created a field of fire from the guns in San Geronimo along the only road to the city but his genius was to bravely place the ambush immediately after the clearing and where the forest began again. The naive and unsuspecting Venables meekly walked into his trap. The Count knew the calibre of his troops was poor, as did Venables know of his own, but his skill was to use them in such away that they did not impede his plans, unlike Venables who was unable to counter the effects of his own poor troops. De Penalva modestly gave the credit for the victory to God but in reality his skill as a commander was as much the decisive factor in defeating the English as was Venables' bungling. Venables disingenuously claimed afterwards that his defeat upon Hispaniola was 'not through the Valour of the Opposers', but in this, as in many matters, the English general was wrong.[81]

The English, perhaps predictably, put the blame for the defeat not upon themselves, nor on the Spaniards, but on God. One English commentator looked upon it as 'the heavy judgement of God fallen upon justly for our miscarriages',[82] whilst another was to write that:

> God was not pleased to deliver it up to us ... sore that never were men more disapoynted then some of us, nor did the hearts of English men faile them more then in this attempt. There was nothing to be attributed to the valour of the Spaniard towards his owne preservation in all this, for he was very ready to fly when we ran not, not onely to God, who respited the enemie, beacause perhaps he found the reformers wores then the unreformed themselves.[83]

A third asked 'surely somebody must be accountable for these miscarraiges, the honour of my Lord Protector, and our whole nation is much concerned in this'. And finally, one Englishman lamented 'every time wee did louck on this Island, that it should bee saide that wee Englishmen should leave such an Hand soe baslie as wee did leave this...'[84]

It was reported in England in September that Thomas Gage had preached the Book of Joshua to the army after Hispaniola from the Old Testament, and this left no doubt as to where he laid the blame for the defeat.[85]

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[81] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.93.

[82] HMC *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.573.

[83] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.161.

[84] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.136.

[85] HMC, *Fifth Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts* (Duke of Sutherland collection), (London: 1876), p.176.

> And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord GOD, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan!
>
> *Joshua 7:7*

But leave Hispaniola the English did, in search of an easier target, one that was not so well defended nor so strong.

Part 3

11

Jamaica May 1655

As the fleet slipped away from the River Hine on 4 May the sense of humiliation and despair must have been palpable. That day the commissioners met aboard the *Swiftsure* when the necessary orders to proceed to Jamaica were formally issued. A council of war was held at which a muster of the army was ordered to be taken, 'to return an account, how many men and arms were sent ashore, and how many returned'. Brandy was to be issued to the men at a pint for every 10 men per day, the soldiers' arms were to be mended as were all the boats. An accurate record of all victuals aboard the fleet was to be made and provision be made for three days' victuals to be issued when the army landed at Jamaica. And, in recognition of the growing rift between the fleet and the army, it was recorded that care was to be taken 'that the soldiers, so well as the seamen, want nothing, and that they have the same allowance as seamen; and that all care be taken to preserve love among them'.[1] Even at this late stage there were still some amongst the English who wanted to continue the fight against San Domingo. According to the *Swiftsure Journal* Penn argued on the night of 4 May, with the fleet out of sight of the shore, that a further attempt be made 'before quitting this place'. He suggested that the fleet stand off to sea for a few days to refresh the soldiers and lull the Spanish into a false sense of security and 'then to come in suddenly upon them'. However the other commissioners 'would not hearken hereunto'[2] the suggestion. By now Penn was furious at the performance of Venables and the army and was barely able to disguise his contempt for them both, he 'being all most choked for want of venting and telling the Armie of thayer Basnis; But he thought it wisdom rather to be silant, and to give them all the Incorraidgment he could, lest they should doe the like whar we are goeing'.[3]

Venables himself had fallen sick whilst on Hispaniola, and the sickness that had afflicted many of his army on land continued to spread once the army was back aboard the fleet. On 6 May Edward Winslow himself fell sick and grew 'bad in health' which was caused, as his servant is reported to have

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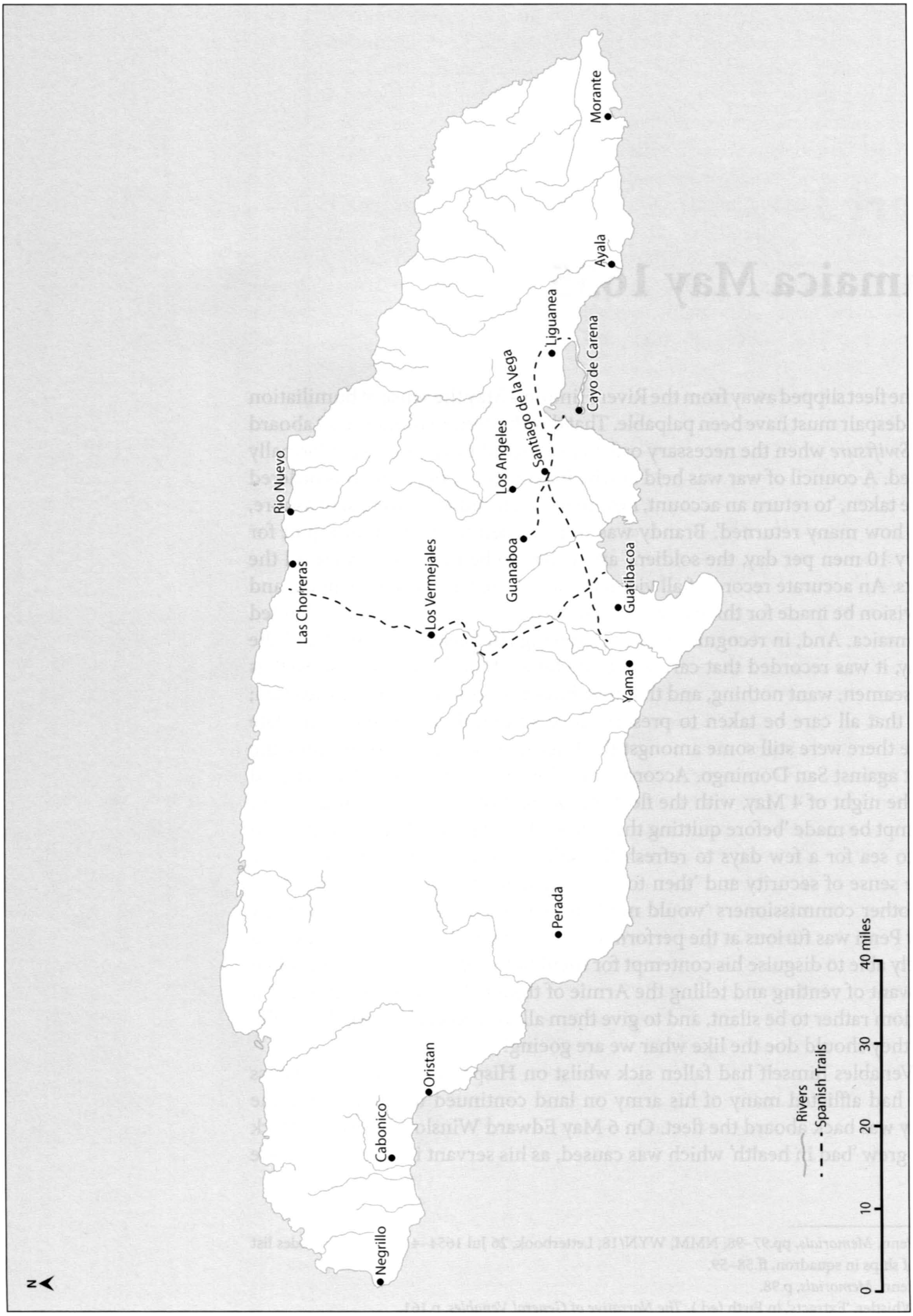
[1] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.97–98; NMM, WYN/18, Letterbook, 26 Jul 1654–4 Sep 1655, includes list of ships in squadron, ff.58–59.

[2] Penn, *Memorials*, p.98.

[3] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.161.


Morante
Ayala
Liguanea
Cayo de Carena
Santiago de la Vega
Los Angeles
Rio Nuevo
Las Chorreras
Los Vermejales
Guanaboa
Guatibacoa
Yama
Perada
Oristan
Cabonico
Negrillo
N
Rivers
Spanish Trails
0
10
20
30
40 miles

Map 4 Spanish Jamaica, c.1655.

observed, due to the poor performance of the army on Hispaniola and which 'had broken his heart.'[4] The following day, 7 May, was proclaimed a fast day and 'another day of humiliation, for all such, whom hunger, thirst, and the sword of the enemy had not yet given a feeling sense of their presumptuous wickedness, and disobedience towards God', in an attempt by the English to find reason and explanation for their recent defeat and to obtain God's forgiveness for their sins and his blessing on their next venture.[5] However it seemed that the God of the Englishmen was not listening, for later that day Winslow, according to the *Swiftsure Journal* 'fell very ill; and being carried down in the afternoon to his own cabin, deceased in the evening.'[6] Back in England it was later reported that as he lay dying in his delirium he 'raved much about Haberdashers Hall in his sickness', where he had been employed prior to joining the expedition.[7] The following morning, and off the island of Navassa, which was likened to 'a small bowling greene', his body was committed to a watery grave in what seems like a solemn and symbolic funeral for all those who had lost their lives upon Hispaniola.

> Now the Buriall of Commishenor Winslow wos performed as solemly as might bee att sea, his grave Being the whole oshon sea, his Bodie being put in a cofen, and 2 cannone shot att his fete, his Corpes being held forth to the sea with ropes over the shipes sid redie to lower downe. Command being gave thay all let goe: our ship gave him 20 gunes, and our Vic Admirall gave him 12, and our Rar Admirall 10, and soe wee bed him adue...'[8]

Winslow was undoubtedly a greatly respected individual and was a great loss to the English. He had played a significant role in the early administrative history of the New Plymouth colony where he displayed the skills of compromise and consensus building to see the colony through its early years. His diplomatic skills were clearly demonstrated in his negotiations with the various indigenous tribes that the English encountered to keep a balance of peace amongst them. Being elected governor on three occasions is a testament to his ability, competence and popularity whilst the level of trust that his fellow settlers had in him is further evidenced by him being selected by them to represent their interests back in England on various occasions. A devout Puritan, he was also a profuse writer whose published pamphlets on the early years of the colony and in the defence of his religion brought him to the attention of the English government after the Civil War as it became increasingly more Independent in its outlook. Due to his being an able administrator, Cromwell soon sought him out as an obvious candidate as a civil commissioner for the expedition to the West Indies.[9] But despite the high regard that Winslow was evidently held in by his peers it is difficult to assess what impact he actually had upon the expedition, for there is very little surviving evidence of his involvement in the management of the venture. He wrote just one letter that has survived from which to glean his effectiveness, from Barbados to Thurloe in March 1655. He seems to have played the role of mediator on a number of occasions, both between Penn and Venables before the fleet even departed England, and in finding a compromise between Colonel Morris and the English when he refused to serve further unless his debts were paid off. He demonstrated that he was a shrewd man and quickly saw through the duplicitous nature of Searle's dealings with the Dutch merchants in Barbados, and was able to clearly articulate such to the authorities in England. He was educated in the ways of the law and was able to follow the legal events that followed the seizure of the Dutch vessels, and no doubt was able to explain these more fully to Venables whose naivety in such matters was readily apparent. He demonstrated that he could not be intimidated when Morris exaggerated his own importance to the expedition in an attempt to get an agreement to have his debts waived. Winslow told the colonel flatly 'our trust and relyance was not on him, but on God'.[10] Venables seems to have had a reasonable relationship with him but it is clear that the general resented Winslow's interference in the promulgation of the order against plundering prior to landing in Hispaniola.[11] He seems to have been instrumental in deciding that no further attempt would be made on San Domingo after the second ambush, once again interfering with military matters but also demonstrating his single-mindedness, determination and strength of character.

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[4] Penn, *Memorials*, p.98.

[5] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.385.

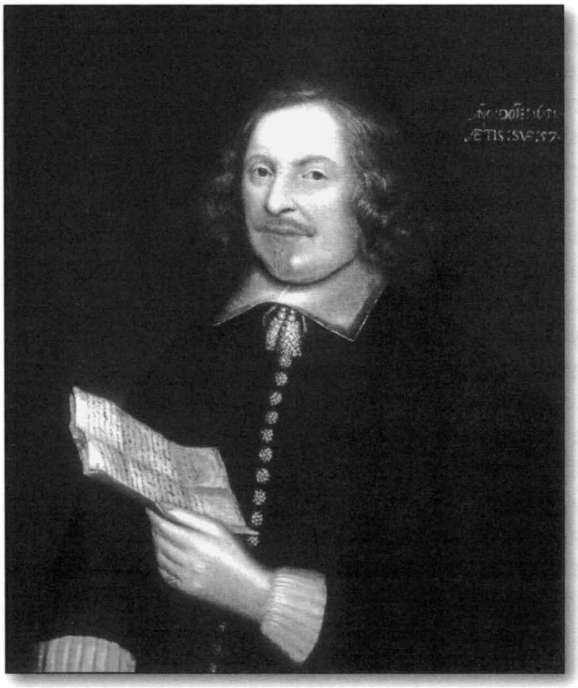
[6] Penn, *Memorials*, p.98. Other English sources record that he died the next day, 8 May 1655.

[7] HMC, *Fifth Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts* (Duke of Sutherland collection), (London: 1876), p.176.

[8] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.136; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.161–162.

[9] *Edward Winslow (1595–1655), ODNB.*

Portrait of Edward Winslow c.1651. Anon. (Pilgrim Hall Museum, Plymouth)



A man of principle and devoted to his god, Winslow's entire life had been defined by his religion. He was loyal to the Commonwealth and there is no question to doubt his statement that he only acted in ways that would 'conduce to the benefit or detriment of his highnes and the commonwealth', though he was fully aware that in his dealings on behalf of the expedition he was likely to become 'an object of revenge' for some, who were to lose out against his principled opinions.[12] John Daniels was one who seemingly failed to appreciate Winslow's attributes and blamed him for the insistence that the army was not to be permitted to plunder once Hispaniola was reached. He described Winslow as 'unresistable [irresistible]' and one who 'would not be contradicted' but also commented egregiously that 'feringe any to have spoile save himselfe, pretending all for the publick treasure'.[13] Venables believed that both he and Winslow were distrusted by the fleet due to their handling of the Dutch prizes and their insistence that Poole be made accountable for his handling of their disposal. Venables further believed that Winslow's outspoken criticism of the affairs in Barbados created unnecessary friction.[14] Venables, so he later claimed, tried to reason with Winslow over the proclamation against plundering and attempt to soften his stance on it, but to no avail as Winslow was determined to see Cromwell's instructions implemented.[15] Winslow was a good judge of character, quickly identifying that the English would get little assistance from his fellow commissioner Butler, but he was hopeful he could be persuaded to take 'the better side in case of difference in judgement'.[16] His relationship with the other commissioners is unclear. He implored Thurloe to send more commissioners but to ensure that these new ones were 'of such principles, as will neither scruple to give or take an oath' which suggests he believed the current ones did not have, though he believed Venables' carriage 'all along, deserves a good testimony'. Winslow wrote that he took his personal oaths seriously and declared an 'oath as an ordinance of God, and as an essential part of government, the very bond of societys', but warned Thurloe that he dared not talk like this to Penn for fear of losing him, despite the love shown between the two of them. He added that he had spoken frankly with Penn before but after which he received no follow-up, which suggests he was less than enamoured with the sailor's character.[17]

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[10] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.250.

[11] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.14–18.

[12] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.249.

The misfortune of Winslow's early death was that the English lost his services before they really needed them. As a civilian he could contribute little to the military preparations, nonetheless interfering on numerous occasions, but after Jamaica was occupied his moderating influence was to be sorely missed, and his skills to mediate between the army and the fleet, as their relationship quickly fractured. The ineffectual Butler had neither the skills nor the inclination to even attempt to perform the duties that Winslow would have relished. Without his common sense approach and attempts to find practical solutions to problems, the expedition quickly became leaderless. Had Winslow survived, even for a just a few more months, he would no doubt ensured a more effective transition of power and authority to those that remained behind in Jamaica when Penn, Venables and Butler fled to England at the first opportunity. It is hard to imagine that Winslow would have acted in such a selfish and irresponsible manner.

That his attributes outweighed his flaws can be demonstrated in no fuller manner than by the eulogies he received upon his death. Only Heane's passing came close to the outpouring of grief and respect that accompanied the commissioner's demise. More than 100 years after his death, when Penn, Venables, Butler, Heane and many others had all been forgotten, Winslow was still being commemorated and fondly remembered in verse:

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[13] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.505.
[14] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.10, 12.
[15] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.17.
[16] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.251.
[17] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.251.

The eighth of May, west from Spaniola's shore,
God took from us our grand commissioner,
Winslow by name; a man in chiefest trust,
Whose life was sweet and conversation just,
Whose parts and wisdom most men's did excell,
An honour to his place, as all can tell.[18]

With Winslow gone the fleet continued to sail towards its next objective. On 9 May Colonel John Clarke, who had taken over command of Heane's regiment upon his death, also died 'of a fever caused by two wounds received in the last business at Hispaniola'. He was buried on Jamaica two days later 'after two volleys ashore, he had ten guns from us [the *Swiftsure*] and six from the Convertine' and was possibly the first Englishman to be buried on the island.[19] On the day Clarke died, the fleet came in sight of Jamaica.

Jamaica, known as Xamayca to the Spaniards and Yamaye to the original indigenous population, had first been settled by the Spanish in 1503, albeit temporarily, when Columbus himself had been marooned on the north side of the island for a year during his fourth voyage of discovery. However the first permanent colonisation of the island commenced only in 1510 with the arrival of Juan de Esquivel and the founding of *Sevilla la Nueva* (New Seville) near to modern day St. Ann's Bay on the north side of the island. This original community had been abandoned by 1534, and the principal settlement on the island transferred to *Santiago de le Vega* on the south side, after the Spanish had realised that the island contained no gold and that the southern side of the island was more conducive to agriculture and cattle rearing which became the basis of the colonial economy. It was also closer to the more important settlements along the Spanish Main which the island needed to support. Initial Spanish interest in the Caribbean was centred on the islands, but once gold and silver in abundance was found on the mainland of Central and South America, the islands of the West Indies became mere staging posts, logistical hubs and centres of food production to support the exploitation and colonisation of the *Terra Firma*. Jamaica, strategically placed along the transport routes traversed by the Spanish fleets though it was, soon became an economic and political backwater within the greater South American empire that grew up during the sixteenth century. With little of value to export and a small colonial population it was consistently neglected by both the Columbus dynasty, which acquired the island as its personal fiefdom, and by the Spanish Crown, who saw it as nonentity compared to the more important island centres of San Domingo and Havana.

By 1655 this backwater, with a declining Spanish and slave population, had been all but forgotten about by the colonial government in Spain. The island had virtually no fortified defences, and with a total population of barely 1,500 souls[20] it had few able-bodied men with which to defend itself. However, to the English it was the island's strategic location, ignored by the Spanish, which was to be its greatest asset. Situated in the middle of the Caribbean, it sat astride the main Spanish transport lanes. Spanish fleets departed Europe twice a year transporting much-needed commodities and supplies to the South American colonies. The New Spain fleet entered the Caribbean and sailed between Jamaica and Cuba before making for Mexico to offload its cargo and to fill up with silver from the mines of Mexico and Central America. From here it would sail for Havana to concentrate into a convoy and await favourable winds and escorts to take its priceless cargo back to Spain. The *Terra Firma* fleet from Spain headed for Cartagena, to the south of Jamaica, from where. fully laden with the spoils of South America, it also headed for Havana to be escorted back to Europe. Prevailing winds were to allow English shipping, State-owned as well as privateers based in Jamaica, to prey upon Spanish shipping off Cuba. These same winds allowed for easy sailing from the island to the Spanish Main where vessels could cruise from Rio Hacha in Colombia to Panama almost at will and were virtually unstoppable. The English possession of Jamaica would provide the opportunity to attack not just the Spanish fleets but also the fortified settlements along the Spanish Main, at which the wealth of the Americas was concentrated awaiting the arrival of the Spanish shipping. Furthermore, possession of Jamaica could provide a stepping stone from which the English could conquer the Spanish possessions of South America, as they had be instructed to do by the Lord Protector. Possession of San Domingo by the English would have fulfilled many of these purposes as well, but defeat there provided the opportunity to occupy Jamaica instead and despite the early difficulties encountered by the English on the island it was to prove the ideal base from which a prosperous English West Indian empire was to emerge.[21]

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[18] James Thacher, *History of the Town of Plymouth, from Its First Settlement in 1620, to the Present Time: With a Concise History of the Aborigines of New England, and Their Wars with the English, &c* (Boston: Marsh, Capen & Lyon, 1835), p.93.

[19] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.99, 100.

From early in the occupation the English were very much aware of the physical topography of the island. A surprisingly detailed and accurate description of the island was sent by Venables to England when Penn departed in late June 1655, and an abridged version of this was printed in the London news-sheets within a week of Penn's return.[22] So authoritative in fact was this description, which could only have been written within a month of the English arrival, that it suggests that it was in fact based on a previous Spanish description that might have been found upon the island. Certainly the Spanish had, from time to time, written descriptions of the island, such as the one written by Jacinto Sedeno Albornoz, former governor of Jamaica, sometime during the middle of the seventeenth century.[23] Venables' description began 'The island Jamaica belongeth properly to the duke of Veragua,[24] who is lineally descended from Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of the Indies.' The island, from *Punta Morante* (modern day Morant Point) in the east to *Punta Negrillo* (Negril) in the west was 'fifty leagues' (150 miles) and its width from 'the port of Caguaya', the later Port Royal to Santa Anna Sevilla (just to the west of modern St. Ann's Bay on the northern coast of the island and the original Spanish settlement on the island) was 'about twenty leagues' (60 miles). The island had two main ports, one where the English landed near *Santiago de le Vega* (St. James of the Plain – modern-day Spanish Town) and one at *Esquyvell* (modern-day Port Esquivel, in Old Harbour Bay) about nine miles from Santiago. Between Santiago, modern day Kingston and Esquyvell lay a crescent-shaped savannah now known as the St. Catherine Plains, with its extension called Anaya in the west and the Liguanea Plain to the east. This area was described in 1655 as 'for the most part open, and savanaland well stored with cattle and horses'. Around the northern edge of this open savannah lay an almost impenetrable mountain range which separated the south coast from the northern coast of the island, and which started in the east with the Blue Mountains, the *Sierra de Bastidas*, and which then merged into the Mountains of the Manatines to the west. Beyond the western horn of this crescent, where it met the sea in Old Harbour Bay, was another fertile savannah, bisected by the river 'Mantiness', and which today is known as the Clarendon Plain but known to the English then as the Santiago, Yama, Bonducu and Guatibacoa regions. This plain was accessible by sea, by a narrow coastal strip connecting it with Old Harbour Bay or by a narrow mountain pass at its north eastern end across the Mountains of the Manatines. The Manatines and Blue Mountains effectively separate the fertile south-eastern part of Jamaica from the rest of the island.[25]

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[20] Penn advised the Council of State in September 'There were not above 12 or 14 hundred men, women, and children upon the island', Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 4, p.30.

[21] For a detailed examination of the Spanish history of Jamaica see Francisco Morales Padrón, *Spanish Jamaica*, (Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle Publishers, 1952 (reprinted in English 2003)).

[22] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, pp.545–547; TT, *The Faithfull Scout, 1 September–8 September 1655*, 129:E.852[33].

[23] Printed in Padrón, *Spanish Jamaica*, pp.245–250.

From high in the Mountains of the Manatines, the *Rio Caobana* (the Mahogany or Black River) winds its way down to the sea farther west along the coast, through the area today known as Santa Cruz and the Pedro Plains, on either side swamps can still be found next to more fertile land. From the mouth of this river the coastline heads in general north-west direction, through Oristan (now known as Bluefields, and under the Spanish the third largest settlement on the island),[26] with the mountains reaching down to the sea. Just before the most westerly point in Jamaica, *Punta Negrillo*, is another isolated savannah, known today as the Westmoreland Plain and to the Spanish then as *Savannah la Mar*. From Negril the coastline continues north-east for a short distance and then almost due east along the northern coastline until it curves back south around the Blue Mountains and reaches the eastern most point of the island, *Punta Morante*. This northern coastline was then a barren wilderness with no settlements of any significance other than the ruins *Sevilla la Nueva*. Numerous rivers flow down from the mountains into the thickly forested valleys and creeks that dot the northern coast, which turned them into places of convenient refuge for the fleeing Spanish. At Morant Point the

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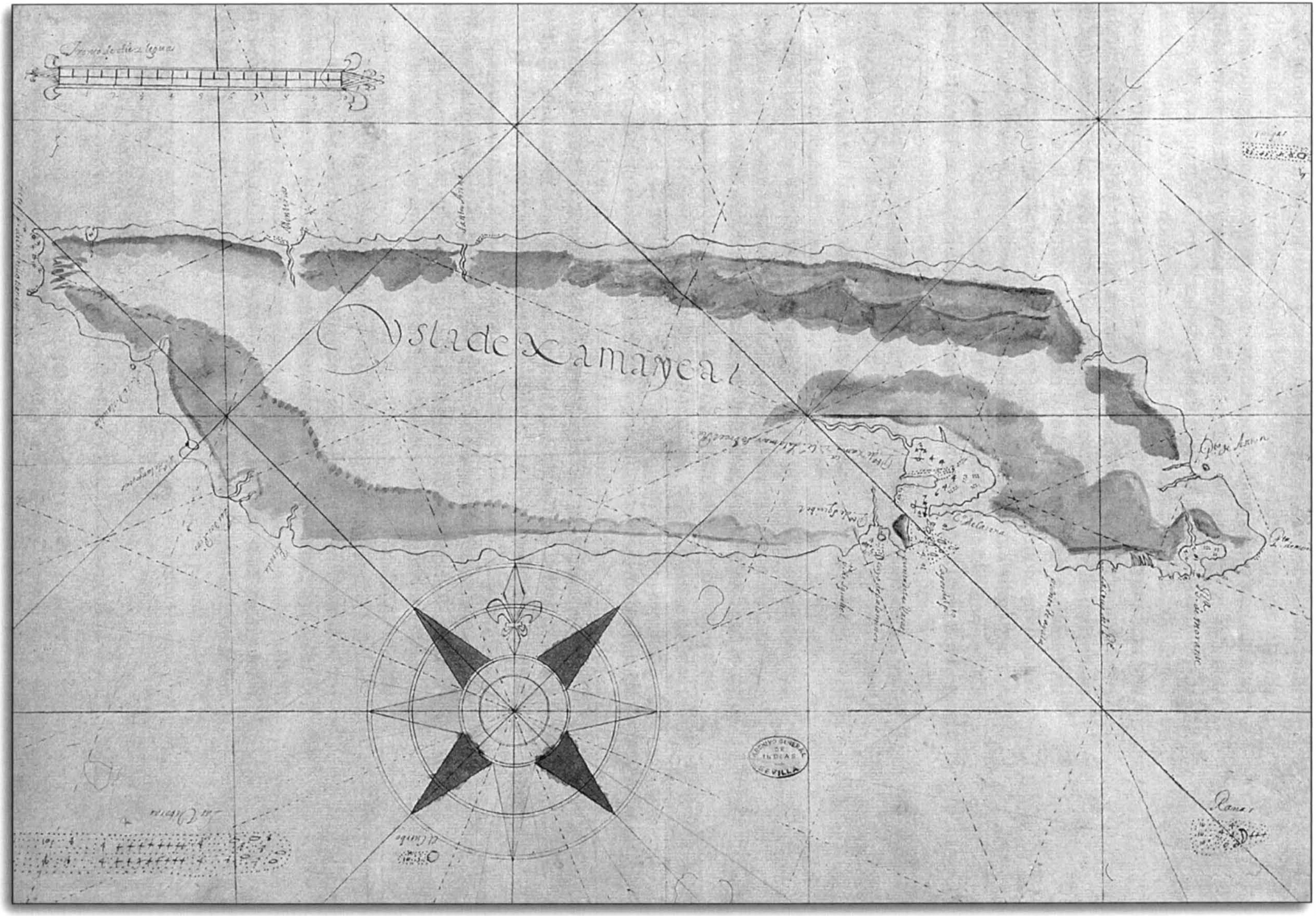
[24] Pedro Nuno Colon de Portugal, 6th Duke of Veragua and Marques de la Jamaica.

[25] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, pp.545–546.

[26] Cundall, *Historic Jamaica*, p.348.


Ysla de Xamayca

Ysla de Xamaica c.1656. Anon. (Archivo General de Indias, MP-SANTO-DOMINGO, 53) See colour plate H.

Plantain Garden River (the only Jamaican river *not* running in a north/south direction) enters the sea on one side of the Morant range of hills whilst on the other side of the range the Morant river meets the sea. The English described this area as 'a dangerous coast, and no good anchoring'. Heading west along the southern coast, between Morant and what is now Kingston, was the small but fertile *hato* (savannah) known as Ayala and which was 'full of tame cattle, and hath much commodity of planting or erecting of sugar engines of water, by reason of two convenient rivers, which it hath running through it fir for that purpose, but is dangerously open the incursion of pirates'. Beyond Ayala lay Liguanea, described then as 'a narrow tract of plantable land between the sea and the mountains, containing some small savannahs, but no habitation, not any cattle but wild'. From Liguanea the land opens up back into the St. Catherine Plain and the town of Santiago.[27]

Upon first sight most of the English eyewitnesses were impressed with Jamaica and the bounty it promised. One English observer, comparing Jamaica with Hispaniola, noted the former as having:

> [A great] quality and quantity of land, it is no less fruitful, and altogether as plentiful in fish, fowl, and cattle of all sorts; it is more mountainous and less woody; rivers there are divers, but the spring heads of some arising from copper mines, the water is somewhat unwholsome, and unsavoury, unless corrected by boiling, which the Spaniards used. Its chiefest defects and impediments are these: it produceth not any mines of gold and silver, as doth Hispaniola, and other parts of the Indies.[28]

One more wrote:

> The commodities of this country are sugar, Spanish tobacco, cotton, chocolate, hides, severall sorts of wood as Lignum vitæ, Brazill, or such sorts. Indigo will grow, so alsoe wine and oile ... Barley we have found and pease, so that we hope to brew beere and ale in time. Tis not soe hot as Italy by day, and cooler by night and mornings. The dayes differ a little in length; at 7 of the clock it growes darke, and it is light at 5 in the morninge.[29]

Another added:

> This island farre exceeds all others in America for fertility in all manner of things, fruits and cattle, horses soe good as any in England ... some good sugar workes, Indian corne, rice, and all sortes of rare fruite in abundance ... salt all alonge the shore, most white and fine that ever I saw, makes itself, infinite and most plentifull of fowle and fish, many brave rivers, rich pastures, woods, and indeed in all thinges farre exceeding any place I saw or read of, only a little heat, which is finely tempered with coole breezes ... tobacco, none better in the world, grows

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[27] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, pp.545–546.

[28] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.389.

[29] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.140.

> here; but the lazy Spanyard cares onely for himself, and improves no further ... Wee are informed, cloves, nutts, and mace, and cinnamon grows here ... I'ame sure I see and have cassia, tamerine, and cocca-nutts, with all fruits imagined ... onely iron, lead, and flint, we wante, with manufactures for cloathing.[30]

Alluding to the heavy rains that nourished the island one observer commented, 'The 3 rainy winter months are August, September, and October, after which the horse and cattle are very fatt.'[31] However, despite the seeming abundance with which the island was endowed it was to become, as one observer dryly commented in 1661, 'rather the Grave then Granary to the first *English* Colony'.[32]

The former, and disgraced, governor of Jamaica, Jacinto Sedeno Albornoz, certainly knew the advantages of Jamaica when he described it as 'the best, the most fertile and bountiful' of all the Spanish islands and nor 'is there amongst them another to equal it, although Cuba and La Espaniola are of much greater size'. He further extolled the strategic benefit of its location when he wrote, 'All the fleets and vessels which do sail to Nueva Espana [Mexico] are obliged upon carrying out their journey to keep in site this isle of Jamaica, since they do so by looking out for the Cape of Morante'. Whilst galleons stuffed full of silver sailing from Cartagena needed to keep 'Jamaica in sight when they do sail ... to La Habana when in search for shelter from the many and dangerous estuaries the which there are in those parts.' Despite the island's obvious benefits Albornoz was unimpressed by the people themselves. He claimed the inhabitants were 'not very intelligent nor active' which was, he believed, a result of the fertile land from which crops were 'obtained with ease, and the which doth cost no money given the great bountifulness with doth exist'. He thought if the islanders applied themselves more and employed 'the slaves in important projects, they would obtain much benefit'. However, the population was split by ongoing feuds between opposing groups that frequently led to bloodshed. Albornoz also believed that the Spanish Crown should take back ownership of the island from the Dukes of Veragua.[33] At the turn of the seventeenth century the population on the island had been recorded as 1,510 souls, made up of 558 slaves, 523 Spaniards, 173 children, 107 African-Caribbeans, 75 newcomers and 74 indigenous people. A smallpox epidemic in 1650 had killed as much as 10 percent of the population and so when the English arrived it was estimated by the Spaniards that around 1,500 souls lived on the island, most likely in the same proportions as at the turn of the century. What is noticeable is that the Spanish themselves made up less than half the population on the island, a number that was to shrink rapidly as most subsequently fled to Cuba.[34] It was therefore no wonder that the Spanish resistance that was to soon emerge was small in scale and dependent upon the slaves and the free African-Caribbeans for support. When Albornoz wrote his description he estimated that there were barely four hundred on the island 'to take up arms' besides 50 mounted men.[35]

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[30] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.508.

[31] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.139.

[32] Edmund Hickeringill, *Jamaica Viewed* (London: 1661), p.1.

[33] Quoted in Padrón, *Spanish Jamaica*, pp.245, 246, 249.

[34] Padrón, *Spanish Jamaica*, pp.35, n 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 306.

This was not the first time the English had attacked Jamaica, however. Sir Anthony Sherley had attacked in 1597, Captain Christopher Newport in 1603 and more recently William Jackson in 1643, all of whom had published accounts of their adventures, and so the island was known to some Englishmen at least.[36]

On Wednesday 9 May 1655 the English fleet appeared off the westernmost point of Jamaica, Morant Point, where it was sighted by two Spanish fishermen who were turtling in the area. They 'sailed their canoes the rest of the afternoon of that day and all night' to warn the inhabitants of the capital of the unexpected arrival of a large fleet 'and hardly arrived' before the English did.[37] The appearance of this unidentified fleet obviously caused a considerable amount of panic on the island, no doubt bringing back memories of Jackson's raid in 1643. The island's governor, Don Juan Ramirez de Arellana, Knight of the Order of Santiago, anxious to ascertain the nationality of this menacing-looking force dispatched his second in command, the *maestre de campo* Don Francisco de Proenza (who had previously fought against the English when Jackson had raided Jamaica[38]) to the port, to find out to whom it belonged. Proenza quickly returned and reported that it was indeed an English fleet 'as the flags taut in the wind proclaimed'.[39] Upon hearing this Ramirez immediately hastened to the port, disregarding the handicaps of his illness (syphilis), and joined the hastily mustered troops of the garrison, numbering 180 men who had 'assembled with their arms and flags'.[40]

The bay close to which the principal Spanish settlement on the island is located was then known as *Puerto Principal* (or *Puerto Grande*). The bay is around 15 miles wide and 10 miles deep but just offshore a tombolo juts from the eastern side of the bay almost across its entire width, creating a narrow channel of water being the only entrance into the bay on the shore side. The Spanish called this cay, and the waters around it, *Cayo de carena*, whilst the English on their arrival called it Cagway, which is a mispronunciation of what the Spanish actually called the river that flows through Santiago (*Rio Caguaya*) and into the sea close to Passage Fort.[41] Inside the bay, and to the north-east of Cagway was a smaller bay (later called Hunts Bay and now the body of water behind the Port Kingston Causeway) and which contained the main landing area for their settlement of *Santiago de la Vega*. Running horizontally behind the tombolo, which separated it from the sea, was a larger bay which was later called Kingston Harbour, along which was a smaller landing place where the open Liguanea plain stretched into the hinterland. After the landing had been effected Penn sent Captain Fernes to sound this part of the bay, and he reported that it was capable of anchoring 1,000 ships, in at least five fathoms of water. The Spanish had a shipbuilding yard along this part of the coast.[42] The main Spanish landing area in Hunts Bay later became known to the English as Passage Fort when they fortified the location, a name that is still used today for that area.[43] The narrow tombolo forks at its farthest westerly end, the lower of the two forks was to become the Cagway settlement, which was later renamed Port Royal. The sea between these two forks developed into the harbour of Cagway. Between the upper fork of the tombolo and the mainland on the other side of Kingston Harbour were many shoals and sandbanks that protruded into the channel that passed Point Cagway, and with similar features on the western side of the bay leading to the entrance of Hunts Bay, this was a naturally narrow funnel that provided the only access to the landing place close to Passage Fort where the English needed to land. Not only was the passage narrow but it was also shallow, varying between just three to nine fathoms deep in parts, making it extremely difficult for the larger English ships to enter the calm waters beyond.

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[35] Padrón, *Spanish Jamaica*, p.250.

[36] Richard Hakluyt (ed.), *A true relation of the voyage vndertaken by Sir Anthony Sherley Knight Anno 1596* (London: 1599–1600), pp.600–601; James Robertson, *Gone is the ancient glory: Spanish Town Jamaica 1543–2000* (Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle Publishers, 2005), pp.32-34; Vincent Todd Harlow (ed.), *The Voyages of Captain William Jackson* (London: Camden Society Publications, 3rd Series, 1924).

[37] Irene Aloha Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica: An Account of What Happened in the Island of Jamaica, from May 20 of the Year 1655 ... Up to July 3 of the Year 1656* (London: Camden Society Publications, 3rd Series, Vol. XXXIV, 1924), p.1.

[38] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.2.

[39] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.2.

[40] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.2.

[41] Frank Cundall and Joseph Luckert Pietersz, *Jamaica under the Spaniards: Abstracted from the Archives of Seville* (Kingston, Jamaica: Institute of Jamaica, 1919), pp.15–16.

Unlike at Hispaniola, Penn was confident that he could make an immediate landing when the fleet arrived off Cagway on the morning of 10 May and so preparations for landing commenced as soon as the fleet arrived. Notwithstanding this, the first English attempt to navigate the narrow channel between the point of the tombolo and the mainland failed, as there was 'little wind' at the time and the fleet remained becalmed in the outer bay. The winds picked up during mid morning and the fleet was then able to enter the narrow channel an hour later.[44] Venables, himself sick, must have been a very worried man at this point, lest the spirits of his men should fail on their landing under fire. The day before the landing a council of war had ordered that at the time of landing 'every lieutenant or officer bringing up the rear, should kill any person whatsoever that should turn and quit his colours without leave, in time of service'.[45] One observer flippantly noted that this 'strict order might have wrought better effect at Hispaniola there being little probability of engaging with an enemy in this place'.[46] Whistler commented that such was the fear of the army officers that many of their men would not fight, that they agreed to allow any that refused to fight to remain on board as the others landed, but it seems unlikely that the army would have even suggested this.[47] A relieved Venables later wrote that 'The Wind favour'd us here, for being in the rear of our men they could not possibly row back, but must vanquish or die.'[48] With no pilots who knew the harbour, some of the English ships were soon in trouble, however. 'Most of the large vessels of this fleet were unable to enter the port; others grounded on the bar. Others of lesser draft ran up by the palm grove of the Liguani ranches, on the other side of the harbour and the beach.'[49] A Spanish map of 1657 clearly shows the narrowness of the entry channel, with the dangerous shallows as well as the water depth.[50] Without a knowledgeable pilot the entry into to the bay is indeed treacherous. The *Hound* certainly grounded, its commander 'not knowing the channell' but was later able to extricate itself 'blessed be God'.[51] Those others that grounded were refloated once the tide came back in. According to the Spanish only two 'flush-decked frigates ... made themselves masters of the port's beach'.[52] Once the fleet had negotiated the narrow harbour entrance some anchored in Hunts Bay, opposite the small landing dock where the Spanish had three forts, 'or rather breast works, were very strong and cannon proofe',[53] whilst the larger vessels were forced to anchor farther along Kingston Bay opposite Liguanea, where the water was deeper.[54] These defensive works were manned by the Spanish troops, along with five iron cannon, though one English eyewitness claims 'there were 8 peace of ordnance yet had but 3 mounted'.[55] Though the position was one of strength for the Spanish their numbers were too few to effectively repulse the English, although an English account claimed 300 Spaniards opposed them, whilst Damian Castilla, who wrote the most detailed Spanish account of the invasion, reported that some 180 men were sent to hold the landing ground.[56] The fleet put the soldiers aboard the smaller landing vessels, and they prepared to storm ashore.

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[42] Penn, *Memorials*,.103.

[43] Cundall and Pietersz, *Jamaica under the Spaniards*, p.104.

[44] Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal', p.15; Penn, *Memorials*, p.99.

[45] Penn, *Memorials*, p.99.

[46] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.385.

Upon sight of the Spanish drawn up on the shore 'standing there ready ... to receive us', it was decided 'that a small frigott should run as close as possible to the shore'[57] and engage the Spanish artillery. Subsequently the galley *Martin* was dispatched for this purpose and anchored within range of the main Spanish battery, 'wich was very angerrie with him, and fiering att her verie hot, and she att them, againe, but did litell hurt of ether side: heare wore 2 other forts of very small account did kep poping att them with Muskettes, thinking to feare us.'[58] Both sides agree that this preliminary bombardment was ineffectual, though it did much to dishearten the Spanish defenders. Whilst the *Martin* engaged the shoreline defences both Penn and Venables boarded her to take charge of the landings. It was by now mid afternoon and most of the army was 'lieing round the Martaine in boates redie to land' though noticeably 'the sea regiment being none of them'.[59] Venables, far from well, looked a pitiful sight. 'For all the time that the Armie was landing, he was walking abord of the Martaine, raped up his cloake, with his hat over his eles, Ioucg'ng [sic] as if he had abin astuding of fissick more then like a Gennerall of an Armie.'[60] Under covering fire from the galley the landing boats rowed forward, looking to their general for encouragement. When they passed the *Martin* the soldiers raised a great cheer, waved and threw their caps and hats into the air. Whistler disdainfully wrote, 'But Gennerall Venables did not give them soe much as one louck for to Incoraidge them, But puled his hat over his eies, and did louck the other waye ... But our Gennerall [Penn] did call to them, giving them Incoraidgment, teling them that the enemie did rune.'[61] As the first English longboats reached the shore a Spaniard called out and 'asked us what we came thither for; it was answered for fresh meat and pieces of eight; the Spaniard replied we were welcome, but one amongst them, speaking very good English (an Englishman, I conceive), bid us land if we durst, making some show and standing in defiance'.[62] Despite this show of bravado the Spanish resolve to remain had been eroded by their appreciation that the English were intent to land and as the 'seaemen rune the boates fast aground close under the fort, and the souldgers leping into the water to wade ashore',[63] the Spanish defenders 'fled in haste'[64] to Santiago de la Vega, or as the Spanish described it 'retired to the town', but only after a small force was left at the lime kilns in the vicinity of modern Port Henderson to watch the English from the top of the hill.[65] The landing was completed without loss of life which 'put sum small appearance of carriage into the spirits of our discurrag'd armey'.[66] First ashore were Fortescue's, Buller's and Carter's regiments, who saw the Spanish defenders run 'towards the town, leaving behind fourteen guns and two little vessels in the channel'.[67] Another English eyewitness claimed the Spanish fired around 20 cannon shot at them but 'all missed our men' and when the Spaniards saw the English were 'desperately bent to land, leaping up to the middle in water' they 'abandoned the forts'.[68] Whistler narrated that 'our seae men rune the boates fast aground close under the fort, and the souldgers Leping into the water to wade ashore. The ennemie seing our resolution did not stand to give any resistance, But rune.'[69] A few days later one naval observer described the two landing jetties around which the English landed as being 'only banks supported with stakes, a matter of 20 yards long towards the water; all the rest [of the shore] being trees and bushes, among which can be no good going ashore.'[70] According to a later Spanish description of Jamaica the English were to later call this jetty the Catwalk.[71] Evidently a blockhouse was situated near the landing point as well, for on 12 May Penn offloaded some steel and iron there for the use of the army. He also proposed to send ashore some of the wounded from the fleet to be housed in it as soon as Venables thought fit to order it.[72]

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[47] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.162.

[48] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.35.

[49] Wright (ed.), The English Conquest of Jamaica, p.2.

[50] AGI, *Planta de las fortificaciones de Jamaica*, c.1657, MP-SANTO_DOMINGO, 56.

[51] Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal', p.15.

[52] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.2.

[53] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.136.

[54] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.2.

[55] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.136.

[56] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.137; Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.2.

[57] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.573.

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[58] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.162. See also Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.2.

[59] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.162.

[60] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.163.

[61] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.163.

[62] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.573.

[63] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.162.

[64] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.385.

[65] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.2.

[66] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.59.

[67] Penn, *Memorials*, p.99.

[68] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.136–137.

Once the army was safely ashore Venables landed, but, as Whistler sarcastically noted, only after 'seeing the ennimie all fled from thayer fortes'.[73] It was now that Venables made his first mistake on Jamaica. Contrary to the agreement of a council of war, Venables decided against following up the retreating Spanish that night, leaving them to escape whilst he rested and reformed his army at the landing site.[74] This misjudgement was to prove costly to the English. Though the capital was but six miles from the landing point Venables refused to advance that night because, he claimed, of a lack of guides and a fear of being ambushed for the 'enemy might in an unknown place, where they could not have day to view all passages and advantages, fall into their quarters'.[75] This delay in occupying Santiago de la Vega allowed the Spanish time to evacuate themselves and much of their property making it impossible for the English to enforce the expulsion of the Spaniards from the island once the surrender treaty had been drawn up and signed. By dispersing themselves across the island at such an early stage it gave the Spanish the space and time to consider their situation and organise resistance away from English interference. From a strategic perspective it would certainly have been more advantageous for the English had they been able occupy the city quickly and maybe even seize the Spanish leadership, than to let them slip away during the night. Once again Venables is guilty of a misjudgement in this respect. Most of the army, however, lamented the lost opportunity for plunder as the delay in occupying the city 'caused above ten thousand pounds damage to the army' as the Spanish had the 'advantage of running away and carrying their goods and treasure with them; whereas if we had marched the first night very probably we had taken them and their goods, if not their persons, their goods.' Another believed the English lost much plunder of value through this delay if 'we may guess at the worth of the Jewell by the splendor of the Cabinet, that kept it: or estimate the largnesse of the Bird by the Nest.' Whilst another commentator writing five years after the landing noted that Venables 'beat the bush so long, till the Bird was flown'.[76] In Venables' defence it ought to be noted that the *Swiftsure Journal* mentions that the army was only fully landed by two o'clock on the morning of 11 May, which, if correct (no other sources indicates it took this long for the landing to be completed) it would certainly have hampered any advance on Santiago on the evening of 10 May.[77]

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[69] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.162.

[70] Penn, *Memorials*, p.102.

[71] Padrón, *Spanish Jamaica*, p.256.

[72] Penn, *Memorials*, p.101.

[73] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.163.

[74] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.646; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.163.

[75] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.35.

Next morning the English army reformed and commenced its six mile march to Santiago at about nine o'clock. From his landing place around Passage Fort Venables led the column through a savannah and onto the road to the town, which quickly entered a wood. Many of the English eyewitnesses agree with the Spaniard Castilla that the terrain was so advantageous that 'A few well disciplined men might prevent many from entering the town', had the Spanish at this point chosen to oppose the invasion by force.[78] The track itself passed two breastworks, one boasting two 'very greate murderers to scour the lane'.[79] 'It is a level road over two short leagues, but hilly, and suitable in this distance for the laying of many an ambuscade. On one side is the Caguaya River, which gives its name to the port. It has gullies, and its fords an enemy may be attacked safely, since he is thirsty, and to cool himself off, runs every risk.'[80] The area around the landing area itself had been cleared of trees by the Spanish, whilst the road to Santiago went through the forest 'to within a quarter mile of the town; all the way being even, without hills, and a fair path for eight to march abreast.'[81] The road to the town was described by a later Spanish account as being a 'wagon way which is wide and flat',[82] that was only 'two short leagues, but hilly'.[83]

By early afternoon the English were within sight of the town. Originally called Villa de la Vega (the town in the field) by the Spaniards, and only later renamed St. Jago de le Vega (the Anglicised version being Santiago de la Vega), the small town had been settled since 1534, but was close to a much older Taino settlement. A river, called the Rio Cagway by the Spanish and later the Rio Cobre by the English but simply known as the Town river during the first years of the English occupation, descends from the mountains, and the settlement was founded by a ford where an east–west island trail converged with trails that went north up into the mountains. This geographically convenient location coincided with a decree of the King of Spain who ordered that the principal settlements on the islands in the Caribbean ought to be some way inland from the coast to minimise the risk of attack from seaborne invaders, and so it was here that the Spanish chose to site their main settlement on the island.[84]

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[76] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.574. See also Barrington's letter to Desborough in Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, pp.646–647; Hickeringill, *Jamaica Viewed*, pp.41–42.

[77] Penn, *Memorials*, p.100.

[78] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.3; Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.137.

[79] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.137.

[80] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, pp.2–3.

[81] Penn, *Memorials*, p.102.

[82] Padrón, *Spanish Jamaica*, p.256.

[83] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.2.

In 1643 Jackson had described the town as consisting of 'four or five hundred houses, built for the most part with canes, overcast with mortar and lime, and covered with tile.'[85] An anonymous Spanish description of Jamaica, dated *c.*1670, provides detail of how Santiago looked before the arrival of the English. It portrayed the city as having 'up to six hundred neighbours of fine figure, together with well constructed houses made of wood, adobe, and rooftile, and several of the principal ones being of stone'.[86] The English described that they found a town of around '400 houses, scatteringly built, and every house apart by itself, a certain distance from any other … The buildings all (except two or three houses that have one or two rooms overhead) are built very low, having not rooms overhead; which, and their standing so by themselves, is because of the great winds and rains that sometimes happen.'[87] Another witness claimed there were 'above 1000 houses; the streets not regular onely some, many of the houses of good brick and timber covered with tile made heere, other houses of clay and reeds, which doe reasonable well'.[88] The town 'stands on almost plain ground; but a little inclining, towards the east, for the better fall of the rains down into the river, which is very shallow, and runs a pretty distance below the town, and empties itself into the arm of sea that branches out of the harbour to the westward.'[89] There was also a 'considerable fort, about half a mile from the town, with six or seven guns in it'.[90] As the army approached it was met by a few mounted inhabitants 'with handerchiefs in their hands signifying a truce'. This was in fact Antonio de Salinas, one of the numerous Portuguese residents of the island, who had been sent by the island's governor to ascertain what the English wanted 'for the enemie did think wee had come upon that account as Jacson did with his flete, which was onlie to vitell, and so be gon againe'.[91] As a gesture these inhabitants brought with them 'presents for the general, wine, poultry, divers sorts of fruits, and other rarities that the country yielded'.[92] While Salinas talked with Venables, the leading elements of the English army entered Santiago without opposition, only to find the town had been abandoned by the Spanish.[93]

The English quickly spread out within the city only to find it 'destitute of inhabitants, or any thing else necessary for their entertainment, or accommodation, except bare walls, bedsteads, chairs, and cow-hides'.[94] Barrington recounted 'our men found nothing in it more than rotten chairs, chests, and such kind of wooden ware'.[95] They did find, however, '10000 hides lying in the houses on the floures for their slaves &c. to lie on, which were brought into a church, and ready to be sent to New England, for bisket, meal, and pease'.[96] Had the English ventured out of the town to the north and west they would have found a stream of refugees fleeing towards the safety of the island's interior. The Spaniard Damian Castilla, who wrote a detailed account of the first year of the English occupation, described the pitiful sight of the escaping inhabitants when he wrote that the roads were:

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[84] Robertson, *Gone is the Ancient Glory*, pp.21, 16–17.

[85] Harlow (ed.), *The Voyages of Captain William Jackson*, p.18.

[86] Quoted in Padrón, *Spanish Jamaica*, p.252.

[87] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, p.103.

[88] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.139.

[89] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, p.102.

[90] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, p.100.

[91] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.163; Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.3; HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.574.

[92] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.386.

[93] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.36.

[94] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.386.

> full of people on foot – children and aged persons, men and women (some beset with pains, others having given birth that day), some dying, and, among all, pitiable confusion and lamentation. It was God's mercy that the enemy did not sally forth that day into the country, for had he done so the affliction must have been even greater, since consternation would have prevented the women, maidens and children from fleeing the danger; rather, they would have entered into it, because they were as wearied as may be imagined, from walking and carrying, each one, the little bundle of dearest possessions he had been able to bring from home, all exposed to the inclemency of rain, sun and winds, and persecuted by hunger.[97]

Amongst the refugees was the entire government of the island, including Ramirez himself who had taken refuge at the plantation of Don Francisco Cartagena de Agramonte, treasurer for the Holy Crusade, about six miles to the west of the city, leaving nobody of authority in Santiago to negotiate with Venables.

As the English army quartered in the island's recently vacated capital, Salinas was brought before Venables and his senior officers. Venables informed him that the English intended to occupy the island and that he expected to present the terms of the Spanish capitulation to somebody senior from their government. Salinas was then dismissed and allowed to seek out Ramirez and let him know what was expected of him. Upon informing the Spanish governor that Venables expected to meet with a senior official, Ramirez sent Salinas back to Santiago the following morning, being 12 May, with the island's *sargento mayor*, Don Francisco de Carvejal, with instructions to ascertain precisely what the English wanted.[98] Upon de Carvejal's arrival Venables duly informed him that the English army was there on the orders of Oliver Cromwell and that they 'came not to pillage, but to plant' and as such he desired a treaty with the Spanish that ceded the island to England and that he expected somebody in authority from the Spanish side to present themselves forthwith so the terms of their capitulation could signed. He notified the

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[95] HMC, *Portland MSS*, Vol. 2, p.574; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.163.

[96] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.138. These would have been dispatched on 22 June 1655 on the three vessels that departed to Boston.

[97] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, pp.3–4.

[98] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, pp.3–4; Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.36.

Spaniards that the terms that were being offered to them were the exact same terms offered to the English when Providence Island was captured in 1641.[99] Venables also demanded fresh food for all his men daily for they had 'been long at Sea with Salt Meat [and] I expected they should send us in an hundred cows daily for our supply, with Fresh Meat and Cassavina Bread'. He made it clear that unless the Spanish provided these supplies he would not treat with them.[100] According to Castilla the instruction was to provide 'thirty beeves and some milk goats and sheep'.[101] De Carvejal then returned to Ramirez and notified the governor of the English demands for food and their terms for the surrender of the island. Venables, sensibly, also asked Penn to deliver provisions from the fleet along with more ammunition.[102] The following day de Carvejal returned to Santiago with the cattle, but not the goats or sheep as the English, so Castilla claimed, 'had left not one of these animals alive, since they pastured almost in its [Santiago] outskirts'.[103] Venables was reported to have been furious when only 30 cows were delivered when he had demanded 100, and using Thomas Gage as his translator exclaimed 'what was he to do with thirty toward the sustenance of sixteen thousand men-at-arms, which he had there?' He continued that if the Spanish failed to provide the quantity expected, as well as some 'saddled horses'[104] then 'the English would themselves fetch them, along with all the horned cattle and small cattle there were'.[105] Annoyed, Venables then told de Carvejal that he would only treat with the governor or his deputy Don Francisco de Proenza, if he had the governor's authority to act on his behalf, 'to avoid delays'. De Carvejal responded that he would meet with the governor and other senior officials to 'consider what was most suitable to the service of God, of the King, our master, and to the welfare of the island'. This response elicited much laughter from the English officers present and it prompted Gage to retort that God 'was well served in Heaven with angels and good souls' and had no need to consult with the King of the Spanish to consider the welfare of the island.[106] De Carvejal responded that Spain held Jamaica through continuous possession and by 'concession and authority of the Holy Apostolic See and of His Holiness Pope Alexander, extended to the Catholic Monarchs and their successors'. Gage, no doubt enjoying the duel of words, countered by arguing 'that in the same manner that these Monarchs had conquered this island, the English conquered it now, and that not right, but might of arms gave them possession'. He concluded that the Pope had no right to confer either land or the right to conquer it, but that he should 'mind his churches and his papists' and not meddle in temporal affairs.[107] With this dressing down de Carvejal was dismissed and told to return to Ramirez, which he duly did.

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[99] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.164.

[100] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.36.

[101] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.5.

[102] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.5.

[103] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.5.

[104] The English had few horses with them, having left nearly all of them behind on Hispaniola.

[105] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.5.

[106] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.5.

[107] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, pp.5–6.

With de Proenza absent Ramirez sent de Carvejal back to Santiago on 14 May with Duarte de Acosta Noguera, another Portuguese resident, to 'come to an agreement advantageous to the service of both majesties'. However, upon their arrival Venables refused to negotiate with them on the pretext that they were not serving military officers, and that he would now only negotiate with either the governor or his deputy. De Carvejal was once again sent back to fetch Ramirez in person whilst de Acosta, along with two captains 'remained with the English, for this enemy always retained hostages without giving any'.[108] Seeing no alternative Ramirez agreed to meet with Venables in person to negotiate a settlement and he wrote to Venables personally to inform him that he was coming the following day,[109] much to the objection of de Proenza, by now returned, and many of the senior Spanish members of the community. They argued constantly amongst themselves throughout 15 May about what they ought to do, and if Ramirez should himself take the risk of going in person. De Proenza was reluctant to agree to any treaty that would diminish the honour of themselves or of the King but eventually Ramirez got his way and it was decided that he would go in person to Santiago on 16 May and treat directly with the English. Before leaving he assured his compatriots that 'he would sign no paper not to the advantage of both majesties, and to the welfare of the island'.[110] This delay infuriated the English, and Venables threatened to send soldiers to fetch Ramirez if he did not show this time.[111] And so on the morning of 16 May the governor and his entourage set out for the city 'accompanied by the maestre de campo [de Proenza], the sargento mayor [de Carvejal], the accountant don Hieronimo Tello (his nephew), by the commissary of the Holy Office, the captains don Francisco de Leiva Ysassi, familiar and high sheriff of the Holy Office for the island, and Julian de Castilla and other persons'. Ramirez was ill, 'prostrate, with more than twenty sores and fistulae which he got in Cadiz and Cartagena, thanks to the uneffectiveness of mercurial ointments'.[112] It was a pitiful sight as 'he was carried in a hammacka between to Negors upon a pole with to men a horsback to wait one him. But the Governor was soe Roten, and soe much eaten out with the pox, that he could neither goe, stand, nor seat, nor well lie, he wos a very sad creater, the enimie woas ashamed that wee should see him.'[113] To greet the Spanish retinue the English army, boasting its strength, drew up before the town. 'There were nine tercios of infantry with 66 flags, rather more than less, those of each tercios differing from those of others in color, and that of each company being distinctive in design.'[114] De Carvejal was at this point sent ahead to obtain a letter of safe passage for the governor's entourage, which was duly provided by Venables. The Spaniards then entered the city and were taken to the residence of the high sheriff of the Holy Office where they were met by the English commissioners Goodsonn, Fortescue,

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[108] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.7.

[109] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, pp.103–104.

[110] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.8.

[111] Penn, *Memorials*, p.103.

[112] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, pp.9–10.

[113] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.164.

[114] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.9.

Holdip and Doyley, and the discussion regarding the Spanish surrender began. Penn himself specifically came ashore on 15 May and travelled up to Santiago to participate in the formalities for 'treatie could not be inded untill he came', being himself one of the commissioners, and all three were needed to agree upon the terms before it could be ratified.[115] According to Castilla the governor was prostrate and in much pain but the English refused to allow a surgeon to attend him, which conduct was 'to be anticipated, since heretic impiety has been guilty of greater cruelties'.[116]

For the Spanish the terms were severe and it was for them a humiliation, but they were comparable to those forced on the English colony of Providence Island just 14 years earlier. They argued throughout the day about the harshness of the terms but to no avail, and it was only on the following day, Thursday 17 May 1655, that Ramirez signed the capitulation treaty.[117] The treaty that Ramirez signed, on behalf of, but without the authority of, the Spanish Crown, was not a negotiated agreement and it was never accepted by the Spanish government in Madrid. The treaty contained 13 individual clauses. Under these terms the Spanish were to surrender all forts, arms, ammunition, 'Utensils, and necessaries of Warr', all shipping and accoutrements as well as all 'Goods, Wares, Merchandise, and what else is upon the said Island' to the English 'for the use of his Highness Oliver, Lord Protector ... without any deceit, embezlement, or Concealment whatsoever.' All the inhabitants were to have their lives spared and to suffer no abuse from the English, whilst those desiring to leave the island would be transported to 'Nova Hispania ... or otherwise to some of the King of Spains dominions in America' during which voyage they would be provided with provisions. All commissioned officers were permitted 'to enjoy and war [*sic*] their Rapiers and Ponyards'. Those that chose to leave the island were permitted to take with them only 'their wearing apparel, and any books or Writings they shall desire'. Those who chose to remain would 'enjoy their freedom and Goods' but not their slaves, whilst they were required to conform to the laws of England. Any items or goods that had been removed from their normal location since the arrival of the English were to be returned. The seventh clause of the treaty specifically excluded any deserters from Jackson's 1643 expedition from the treaty. Hostages would need to be given by the Spanish to ensure their compliance of the terms and against the safe return of English shipping that was to transport them from the island. In order to prepare sufficient shipping the Spanish were to provide a list of all people requiring passage from the island, as well as a separate list of all 'Servants and Slaves'. Yet another list was to be provided of the 'Inhabitants and freemen' of the island stating their 'Names, Titles, qualities, and occupations' together with their wives, children, servants and slaves. Only those persons named on such lists would be able to obtain shipping from the island. Clause 12 stated that 'all Slaves Negroes and others' were to present themselves 'upon the savanna before the Town of Caguaya, to receive such favourable concessions as are intended to be made unto them touching their Liberty'. Six of the clauses included a blank date by which the terms of that clause needed to have been complied with, but unfortunately no date for such compliance is given. This treaty was signed on behalf of the English by Fortescue, Goodsonn, Holdip and Doyley, whilst it is not known who signed on behalf of the Spanish.[118] Castilla's account of the terms of capitulation corresponded with those recorded by Venables in his *Narrative*, but he also added that 'No priest nor book might remain on the island'.[119]

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[115] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.9; Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.164; Penn, *Memorials*, pp.102–104.

[116] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.10.

[117] Penn, *Memorials*, p.102.

According to one English officer the Spanish were given seven days (meaning by 23 May) to comply with terms of the treaty and 'come in ... out of the woods where they then lay' and that shipping would be arranged for them to leave the island by 16 June, however Castilla noted that they had 12 days to comply with the terms.[120] The Spanish signatories were all to remain as hostages, thinking 'that by that they would see all things performed for thayer oune sackes'.[121] These hostages included both Ramirez and de Carvejal as well as Duarte de Acosta, although it seems de Proenza was able to convince the gullible Venables that he should be released so he could persuade his compatriots to accept the inevitable.[122] Rather disingenuously Whistler was to claim in another dig at Venables that he was 'much pufed up with the thoughtes of thos termes that the ennimie ware like to sine to, he knowing that it would be much for his advantaig; for if our Armie did fight, then our souldgers would gett all the plunder and Riches; But if thay did yield upon Artickles, then all wos in his hands to doue as he did pleas'.[123] Quite likely these were Venables' exact thoughts, but not because of his own self-interest, but because they were the instructions of Cromwell himself, to retain all the plunder for the use of the State. Certainly the feeling of one of Fortescue's captains was one of relief that the army was not required to fight as he admitted that 'wee had little incurragment to gave further dependance on the vallour of our souldjours, the sence of theire former cowardice being fresh in our mindes'.[124]

After the treaty had been signed, Hieronimo Tello was sent to inform the Spaniards of its terms. Perhaps understandably there were many amongst them who thought Ramirez had capitulated too easily, though being himself sick and weak he lacked the energy to do otherwise. The governor was able to use his authority to obtain the compliance of his junior officials to allow him to treat with the English, but once the treaty was signed, and significantly Ramirez remained with the English as a hostage, de Proenza (now de facto governor) was able to obtain a consensus from those that remained to offer a challenge to the invaders. With Ramirez in Santiago, de Proenza and much of the rest of the island's leadership and inhabitants had removed themselves to Guatibacoa, where on the plains there were sufficient herds of cattle to feed the refugees. The treaty was unanimously rejected and a pledge to resist was given, with some 'saying that they would rather die in the bush than see their daughters and wives in the power of the heretics ... as each person endeavoured to get away to the mountains and the bush.'[125] Rather than prepare to evacuate the island with little but the clothes on their backs, the Spanish resolved to resist the invaders. They rounded up what possessions they could, gathered 'up all the ablest and best horses ... and drove away away most of their cattle near the town, and, following after their goods, wives, children, and servants, which were gone before at least three days journey, swept and cleared the country, as they went, of all vital provisions, leaving their old pocky governor as a hostage.'[126] From here de Proenza began to direct the resistance against the English. During the week in which the Spanish had to prepare themselves to hand themselves over the English they instead sent out groups to ambush English foraging parties when they came forth into the country to hunt guinea hens, ducks and other fowl that were abundant on the island.

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[118] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.36–39.

[119] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.12.

[120] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.137; Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.12.

[121] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.165.

[122] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.165.

[123] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.164.

[124] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.59.

Barrington observed the beginnings of the Spanish resistance when he later wrote how they began to:

> [kill] our men that straggled (thinking to get bread) by tens, and more sometimes in a company, and our poor creatures were so much straightened through the want of provisions that they would venture out without order to kill themselves some meat, by which means I am confident that a day scarcely passed over our heads without having intelligence of the loss of more or less from the army at the first of our coming hither.[127]

It was during this time that the first English prisoners were captured including George Paine (Payne), who, being a Spanish speaker, had been brought from Barbados as a translator.[128] From him the Spanish learnt more details of 'the glorious resistance which had been made in the island of Santo Domingo',[129] which they had an inkling about during the few days before the treaty was signed, when:

> [the] enemy had free egress and regress as well into the town, and English quarters ... they invited divers soldiers of the army to visit them in their quarters, where they had wine given them, and were much made of; by which means they gained knowledge, by some overcome with liquor, that they had been at Hispaniola, and how they were there dealt withal.[130]

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[125] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, pp.12–13.

[126] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.386.

[127] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.574.

[128] Paine later described that he was 'taken prisoner in Jamaica detayned 10 mo. In ye woode, caryed there to Cuba, thence to ye Havanna, thence in the Gallions to ye Canayes, where he made his escape.' He was awarded 95*l* 10s by the Council of State in 1658 as a pension. TNA, SP25/78, f.683.

[129] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, pp.10–11.

[130] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.386.

As they came into contact with the English soldiers they could see for themselves the poor condition that they were in, and that they were hungry, and it gave them greater encouragement to resist. Whistler, again in his sarcastic manner, wrote, 'we did sufer ye ennimie to com among us and see the state of our Armie, for which wee were much to blame: for they had mor wit then wee had, for they would not sufer any to com among them.'[131] Even during the discussions regarding the treaty the Spanish were acting in a duplicitous manner, at least according to Whistler, when 'thay ware caching Horses, and fiting all things for to carrie away thayer goods, and Blinded our pore sillie Armie with this pretenc'.[132] De Proenza also directed his followers to round up the cattle near the town at night and remove them farther away so that the English were unable to feed off them.[133] When de Acosta learnt of this he sent his slave to the Spanish camp to implore them to not do this, as it was putting the lives of the hostages at risk. By now the hostages were being seen as traitors who had surrendered the island without a fight, and so the slave was killed on the pretence that he was a messenger of the enemy. The same thing happened to Juan Jimenez, who brought a letter from de Carvejal in the city to his wife. Probably on 19 May de Proenza even sent about 130 soldiers 'with fire arms and lances' to a bridge around six miles to the west of the city in a show of force.[134] Very quickly the Spaniards under de Proenza began to challenge the English with defiance, but despite this it took Venables some time to realise that the bulk of the island's inhabitants were not going to abide by the treaty that Ramirez had forced upon them.

Once again Venables failed to grasp what was transpiring before his very eyes. Himself sick, he naively assumed that the Spaniards, whom he had let escape, would meekly accept the terms that he had imposed upon them. In his arrogant dealings with Ramirez he failed to realise that he had no leverage over the Spaniards whatsoever. Venables had no idea where they were or how to find them and so was in no position to enforce compliance of the treaty. Having left all his horses on Hispaniola he had no mounted force available to him to scour the countryside and marshal the Spanish together (although he did make attempts to mount some of his men with local horses[135]), and ensure that they were ready for transportation at the agreed time. Instead, all he did was wait in Santiago for their surrender. Barrington wrote that the officers suggested that troops be sent into the hinterland to ensure compliance but that this suggestion was 'not hearkened unto'.[136] Whistler concurred with this and noted that Venables 'would not give way to it'.[137] Six years later Hickeringill suggested that at this time Venables was more interested in eating the food provided by the Spaniards than in fighting them.[138] Only gradually during the week between the signing of the treaty and the date when the Spanish were due to come in, did Venables realise they had been 'overcome by the subtlety and deceit of the Spaniards at Jamaica'.[139] Whilst not part of the treaty Venables had insisted that provisions be sent into Santiago daily for the use of the army and de Proenza undertook to arrange this, which initially he did. De Proenza:

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[131] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.165.

[132] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.165.

[133] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.39; Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.386.

[134] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, pp.11, 10; Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, p.104.

[135] Carte (ed.), *A Collection of original letters and papers*, p.51.

[136] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.574.

[137] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.163.

> being more sutell then the rest ... did knowwhat would kep our sillie Armie quiat, and hee did daylie send in Cattell More or Less to us, and whilest our Armies were eating of befe, the Spaniard ... did ca[u]se all the ennimies to mount them selves and all thayer goodes a horsback, and soe fled up into the Mountaines.

When, after a few days, this supply of beef failed to be delivered for two days in a row, a party of soldiers was sent out to investigate but soon returned with the news that the Spaniards were nowhere to be found. Venables took this news badly when he saw 'how baslie they had cosened him'.[140] As early as 19 May[141] the English began to sense that the Spanish were preparing to renege on the treaty but it was on 21 May that Hieronimo Tello returned to Santiago with a bombshell. He brought with him a letter from the Spanish complaining of 'the severity of the articles, to which if they complied, they were utterly ruined, desired rather to expose their lives to the hazard of warr than to condescent to such termes'.[142] Daniel recounts how the Spaniards claimed that having been born in Jamaica they had nowhere else to go, and preferred to 'dye here then begg' elsewhere.[143] Castilla's account, however, gives no suggestion that the Spanish gave the English any formal notification that they had rejected the terms of the treaty. Finally it made sense to Venables. The reports of missing soldiers, the lack of food being delivered, the removal of the cattle from the environs of the city – the English had been duped. The Spanish, despite Ramirez' quick and easy capitulation, intended to contest the English occupation. The Spanish war of resistance had begun.

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[138] Hickeringill, *Jamaica Viewed*, p.42.

[139] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.387.

[140] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.165.

[141] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, p.104.

[142] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.137; HMC, *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.574.

[143] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.508.

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Jamaica June–July 1655

According to the writer of the *Swiftsure Journal* it was known to the English that the Spanish were not prepared to abide by the terms of the treaty as early as the night of 19 May (only two days after it was signed), when it was reported on board that the Spanish were 'standing in defiance of the [English] forces'.[1] This comment most likely refers to the show of force by the bridge to the west of the city described by Castilla.[2] Venables must have been aware of this at the same, as he had been aboard the *Swiftsure* since the day the treaty had been signed.[3] This open act of defiance should have alarmed Venables, even if it was not completely clear at this early stage that the Spanish had no intention of surrendering themselves, and yet he inexplicably remained on board until late afternoon on 21 May instead of going immediately ashore to assess for himself the situation and make plans accordingly. His immediate reaction when he realised that the Spanish did not intend to surrender was to threaten to hang Ramirez and the other hostages for their breach of faith, and he impotently wrote a letter to the Spanish to that extent. However the Spaniards, now under the more determined leadership of de Proenza, 'valued not his high words' and ignored his threats (which he never carried out anyway).[4] It was only on 22 May that he dispatched a force under Buller and Ward in an attempt to catch up with the Spanish and try to enforce the terms of the treaty, but by then it was too late and the Spanish were long gone and hiding in the mountains. Again Venables displayed poor judgement in not reacting quicker to this challenge, and by doing so he gave the Spanish yet more opportunity to distance themselves from the English. Had he reacted more resolutely and rapidly he might well have caught the fleeing Spaniards but once again he failed to grasp the realities of the situation and was unable to act decisively, once more surrendering the initiative to his enemy. Interestingly it is known that Venables was openly criticised at the time for remaining onboard between 17–21 May and that some of the seamen had made some 'scandalous reports' concerning why he tarried aboard for so long. Given the typical coarse behaviour of sailors it is likely that these rumours centred around his wife. So incensed was Venables that he politely requested Penn to let the true reason for his lengthy stay aboard (being the arrival of the store ships, according to him) be made known 'to vindicate me in that particular, that soe such rumors may cease'.[5] Irrespective of the reason for his delay it was yet another poor judgement made by Venables.

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[1] Penn, *Memorials*, p.104.

[2] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, pp.11, 10.

[3] Penn, *Memorials*, p.104.

[4] HMC, *Seventh Report*, p.574.

Venables had constantly alienated himself from his senior officers since their arrival in Jamaica. After refusing to march on Santiago on the night of the landing, contrary to the will of a council of war, he then refused to send out a force to stop the fleeing Spanish when it was proposed by his senior officers, nor did he allow the army send out parties into the interior during the negotiations, against the advice of the officers. Once it finally became apparent that he had been duped by the Spanish, Venables agreed to send out a strong force under Buller to attempt to locate the Spanish and enforce the terms of the treaty, but it was too little, too late. As Barrington explained, 'The politick intent of this grand design was to surprise the Spaniards and their luggage ... as they were shipping off for the [Spanish] main.' However it was too late, as the Spanish 'directed their passage through by-ways, thick woods, and over high hills and large mountains' and had fled inland, to regroup and plan their next move. Not only did the Spanish remove themselves but 'likewise their slaves, nigh 3,000 in number, who would have been of great advantage to the army in planting provisions for our future subsistence.'[6] Buller departed Santiago on 22 May with around 1,500 men, being 'a commanded party out of each regiment of the best souldjours'[7] and headed westwards into the St. Catherine Plain in search of the Spanish. A second force of 700 men commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Ward (commander of Venables' own regiment) was embarked onto a small flotilla led by the *Falcon* fire ship under the command of Captain William Tickle, to be landed at Macaire, modern-day Old Harbour Bay, in an attempt to entrap the fleeing Spanish.[8] Just outside of Santiago Buller's force encountered a rearguard of Spanish, just beyond the small bridge that both sides had met at during the negotiations. One English witness stated 'onely a partie of about 300 faced our party for a while, being most horse, and soe went their wayes, never endeavoring to engage but to fly from us'.[9] The Spanish sources, however, paint a much more dramatic picture of this first real clash between the opposing armies on the island. Castilla recounts, 'This army having arrived little more than half a league from the bridge, a colonel advanced and saw two scouts of ours. They were the ensign, Joan Gomez de Posada, and Diego de Medina. The Englishman called them loudly, saying; 'Dogs, come to the army.' They spurred up their horses as if to flee, and the Englishman, prouder yet, spurred up his. When they saw that he was in a convenient place, they turned and killed him with lances. Neither the sidearms and the pike he carried to defend him [could help], nor the 80 mounted men who were the army, which at full speed advanced to the bridge, in great grief having lost this colonel.'[10] No English source can corroborate this claim and so it might just be fanciful bravado on the part of the narrator.

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[5] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.92.

[6] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.574

[7] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.59.

[8] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.137; Penn, *Memorials*, pp.104–105; NMM, WYN/18, Letterbook, 26 Jul 1654–4 Sep 1655, includes list of ships in squadron, Wynne Papers, f.61.

[9] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.138.

No engagement took place at the bridge and the Spanish slipped further away and the English were never able to make contact with their main body. The two English forces joined up on 24 May, in the Anaya district, and then headed along the coastal route into the Clarendon Plains. As they marched they searched whatever Spanish properties and ranches they came across but found little of value. At the Santiago ranch they 'rounded up forty-seven head of cattle, and breakfasted on all the dogs and cats of that ranch, and colts and donkeys, of the meat of which they are very fond'.[11] The English ventured farther into the Clarendon Plain to the ranches in the Guatibacoa district where there 'remained three days, preparing meat'.[12] Having failed to encounter the Spanish, who by now were encamped in the mountains, and having 'done little more then onely forraged the countrey',[13] the English returned to Santiago on Thursday 31 May 'with all his men in verie good order and health'[14] after 'a long march to little purpose'.[15] Buller also brought with him some cattle and around 20 prisoners, including two English deserters from Jackson's expedition of 1643. These Englishmen were questioned as to why the Spanish had not abided by the terms of the treaty, to which they replied that the Spaniard believed the English 'killed all as the priests told them, and the priests do terrify the negroes and the Spanish amongst them by saying that we do deny God, and that when any cometh to us we do put out their eyes ... and further say we are come but for two or three months to victual and then away.'[16] Whilst the expedition failed to stop the Spanish from departing, the English did gain much intelligence on the topography of the southern part of the island and they witnessed the abundance of cattle, even though it was noted that much of it had been driven off by the retreating Spanish, and noticed 'the great abundance that are in the more remote parts of the country'.[17] This knowledge did much to raise the morale of the army, for as Barrington wrote, there was 'little fear amongst us of wanting flesh if we are not our own enemies'.[18]

With the Spanish gone from the environs of Santiago the English army, some seven thousand strong when it first landed and concentrated in and around the by now overcrowded city, soon faced a more deadly enemy than the Spaniards were ever to be – disease. The soldiers had picked up a multitude of tropical diseases in Hispaniola from the food, heat and squalor of their camp on the River Hine. Many died both there and aboard the fleet as it sailed towards Jamaica, and when the army occupied Santiago they brought the sickness with them. In the days after their arrival the army lay idle around the city, with no thought given to sanitation. Weak, weary, hungry and demoralised, the sickness spread through the army like wildfire. Unlike on Hispaniola the English now had plenty of drinking water available from the river that ran past the city, but this would soon have become contaminated as it was used for bathing and toileting and the tainted water was then consumed by the soldiery, leading to a spread of dysentery (the bloody flux) and probably cholera, typhoid as well other waterborne diseases. The unrelenting heat of the sun further weakened the English, as did their lack of fresh food, making them even more susceptible to these diseases. Exposed to constant heat and rain the men quickly became febrile and sick, which only aggravated their other ailments further. The entry to Hunts Bay later became known as Mosquito Point for a reason – the entire area around the city was infested with mosquitoes, and they brought with them malaria, dengue fever, possibly yellow fever and a host of other unpleasant sicknesses to which the English had no immunity. Waste, human and other kinds, were not disposed of properly. The carcasses of cattle were left to rot in the open air whilst the growing numbers of human corpses were insufficiently buried. The city soon became unhealthy and malodorous. Within days the army was consumed by disease and sickness which was followed quickly by death as the English had no medicine, nor even knowledge, to combat the epidemic that by then was ravaging the area. So rapid was the deterioration of the English army that Whistler was to note, 'Soe by this Means within 12 Dayes after our landing they could not droe out 50 men out upon sarvis, whereas when they landed most of the Company ware 100 men.'[19] In fact the spread of sickness was so quick that Venables, writing on 26 May, was to note that almost half the army was at that point sick.[20]

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[10] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, pp.13–14.

[11] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.14.

[12] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.14.

[13] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.59.

[14] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.138.

[15] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.388.

[16] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, p.59; HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.571.

[17] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.138; Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.388.

[18] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.571.

Many of the English present were to write of their experiences during these first brutal weeks of the occupation. Barrington in a letter in June to England wrote that:

> the plague is very much feared here, and doubtless (without God's preventing mercy) will come sore amongst us, for the scents are here so noisome that in some parts of this town a man is not able to walk, and all occasioned by ourselves in letting our men (some of them) lie above ground, and others buried so shallow underground that they already scent through; besides this, we offend our quarters very much by our own nastiness, and throwing the garbage of the cattle in inconvenient places, all which doth at present very much annoy us, being little course taken for preventing the like future inconvenience.[21]

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[19] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.166.

[20] Carte, *A Collection of Original Letters and Papers*, pp.51–52.

[21] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.574.

Another wrote:

> never did my eyes see such a sickly time, or see many funerals, and graves all the towne over that it is a very Golgotha ... For my own part in 25 yeares have not I endured soe much sicknesse as heare with the bloody flux, rhume, ague, feavor, soe that I desire earnestly to go for England in March next, if permitted, for I am fallen away 5 inches about.[22]

The English camp became a pitiful sight to behold, with 'the heavey hand of the Lord afflicting us with sickness, hath given us a greater blow that the Sword did in Hispaniola'.[23] The following month another letter to England commented that, 'sicknesse hath destroyed a considerable part of our armie, and about 1000 we have still remaining sick of the flux and feavors (the usual diseases,) which have carried away almost all my best friends ... but blessed be God who hath sent me health in the midst of sicknesse, and life when soe many lie dead.' Because of sickness this writer had 'already fallen away 4 fingers about the wast'.[24]

With so many dying, the strength of the army was obviously impacted. Venables landed with around 6,000 men (excluding the Sea Regiment) in mid May, but in a letter home on 26 May he claimed that almost 3,000 men were sick.[25] On 4 June Venables and Butler jointly wrote to Cromwell, 'that we have not above two colonels in health, three majors, some seven field officers in all besides many have been already swept away with this disease; left we shall suddenly want officers fit to command our soldiers.'[26] A muster of the army around November 1655 showed that of the original regiments which landed in May, only around 3,800 men (and women) still survived, of whom 1,861 were noted as being sick at the time of the muster. Assuming these figures are accurate the army probably lost around 2,200 men dead in the first six months of the occupation, the vast majority through sickness and disease. Of those remaining in November almost half were sick. The army that landed at Hispaniola amounted to around 6,000 effective soldiers (excluding the Sea Regiment) but by November fewer than 1,900 soldiers were recorded as being fit, barely 20 percent of the original strength of the army. This is a staggering loss rate.[27] Venables himself was sick, he claimed to have become sick in Barbados, and it was rumoured that he was dying whilst many believed that he had in fact died.[28] He was to later write:

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[22] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.142.

[23] HMC *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.574.

[24] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.140–141.

[25] Carte, *A Collection of Original Letters and Papers*, pp.51–52.

[26] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.510.

[27] TNA, CO1/32, Privy Council and related bodies: America and West Indies, Colonial Papers (General Series), Addenda., 1591–1656, f.123. These figures exclude the reinforcements that accompanied Robert Sedgwick when he arrived in October 1655.

[28] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.388.

> I was wasted with sickness, so that I was incapacitated to counsel myself, much less able to Command or direct the Army; and that I stay'd above a month after those votes [to return him to England], before I came away, to see if I should recover so as to be able to discharge the duty of my place, but grew daily worse till I was at last depriv'd of senses, and knew not what I did, or spoke, and in that Condition (by the Physicians advice) I was carried on ship board to try if the sea would (as it had formerly) stop my Flux, for if I stay'd at Land I was a dead Man: and it was but the trial of one Experiment, Whether the Fish or Worms must eat me.[29]

Not only was the army racked by disease and sickness but hunger as well. The expedition had been short of food since leaving England as a result of poor organisation and bad luck. Barbados had hardly been able to support the army when it arrived let alone provide it with additional provisions. Upon Hispaniola the supply system was under immense pressure and had it not been for the ability of the army to obtain limited supplies of food, mainly meat, on the island it would most likely have collapsed completely. The situation was aggravated by the erosion of trust between Penn and Venables which led to the less than co-operative assistance of the fleet in providing provisions to the army. With supplies dwindling on board the fleet the army was again on reduced rations as it sailed to Jamaica. Penn reminded Venables of the shortage of provisions in a letter on 12 May after he had sent 'six thousand of bread, besides three days' oatmeal' ashore, along with ammunition. He added, 'I earnestly desire you to give order, that the match and bullet be well husbanded, for that our stores are very much exhausted; and our condition in point of bread being well known to you, I beseech you think of some way of supplying the army with cassada [cassava], of which, I am informed, good quantities may be had.'[30] This shortage was partially alleviated after the army landed when Venables was able to obtain meat and other provisions from the Spanish, but these were only available for a few days. The little food to be found in Santiago was all soon consumed. A small relief was provided when, on 19 May, two of the missing supply ships from England finally arrived carrying aboard 'arms, mortar-pieces, &c., and about seventy or eighty thousand weight of biscuit', some of which was immediately landed for the army, as well as some much-needed horses.[31] Venables, writing to Cromwell a few days later, noted that the 'bread they brought us is so inconsiderable, that it will but serve the army 22 days at half allowance'.[32] The English were at least able to hunt for themselves but the Spanish had driven away much of the cattle that grazed in the vicinity of the city, forcing the English to venture farther into the interior in search of food, making them vulnerable to Spanish attack. Furthermore, the haphazard methods by which the English hunted scared off most of the cattle they encountered, whilst their inability to kill them, rather than just wound them, meant many escaped and died in the bush from their wounds. All of these factors together meant the English were increasingly unable to feed themselves and soon hunger, followed by starvation, became prevalent.

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[29] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.74.

[30] Penn, *Memorials*, p.101.

[31] Penn, *Memorials*, p.104; HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.91.

[32] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.510.

For the few days that the Spanish provided the invaders with meat they were content. As Whistler explained, 'They did daylie send into our Armie a mator of 200 Befes a day, which our armie did like very well, thay Being Contented like swine with peas when pearill laye before them.'[33] But even then it was not enough for the ravenous army, being barely enough for one beast per company, and when this was distributed, 'the Capt. would have the Ribes, and the Lift and Insine the serlines, and by that time that all the rest of the Ofisors were sarved thar would hardlie remaine a pound a pece for the souldgers'.[34] But what the Spanish were to provide soon ran out, and the army had to rely on the provisions aboard the fleet for sustenance. The bread from the supply ships also soon ran out, although Barrington claimed few of his men received any of it and then told his father in July, 'we have no bread delivered to us ... The sick men have bread given them but not the well, neither can I satisfy myself that any we shall have until it shall please God to send it out of the earth, or some merchantship arrive here that will sell it to particular men.'[35] In early June Venables and Butler wrote to Cromwell concerning their shortage of provisions, and in particular of bread. They informed the Lord Protector that:

> The want we have been in hitherto of bread (we not being able to be suddenly supplied therewith out of the fleet, or our stores, through want of waggons and other conveniencies for transportation thereof) joined with the drinking of water, hath already cast both officers and soldiers into such violent fluxes, that they look more like dead men crept out of their graves, than persons living.[36]

With finite supplies aboard the fleet, Penn could do little to assist. By the middle of June Venables wrote that they had bread for only three weeks, and five weeks' supply of biscuit, at half a biscuit per man per day. Venables later chose to accuse the fleet of withholding provisions to the army whilst the fleet remained well fed, despite Desborough's promise before the army left England that everything aboard was for both the army and the fleet. He also claimed that, 'bread we extreamly wanted which was sent us [from the fleet] with a streight and slack hand, and also very bad'.[37] He further wrote that when he asked Penn for more provisions he claims the admiral replied that 'the Men must work or rott. I reply'd their present labours must stay a time to receive the return of a crop, and if they were not supply'd till they did reap the fruit of their endeavours they would certainly be lost or rot before that day.'[38] Certainly the pressure that the lack of provisions created further inflamed the rift between the two, but whether this was truly Penn's reaction is not certain. However, if one had money, biscuits could be brought and stockpiled. Barrington bought enough to last him and his family six months, whilst those under his command died.[39]

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[33] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.164.
[34] Whistler, 'Extracts', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.166.
[35] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.575.
[36] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.510.
[37] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.12, 40, 48.
[38] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.47.

Venables wrote many letters to England during the first few weeks in Jamaica, notifying influential members of the government of the condition of the army and imploring their assistance to send more supplies. To Thurloe he wrote on 13 June, 'We struggle with all difficulties ... we have not three Weeks Bread, and little Cassavy in the Country ... Our Men die daily, eating roots and fresh flesh (when any food is gotten) without Bread.'[40] To Montague on 26 May he ended a letter after describing the lamentable condition of his army, 'Pray send us bread and meal, or else we perish; here it is not to be had, and New England (we are assured) is not able to furnish us, and, therefore, England must speedily, or we perish.'[41] To Martin Noel, who also sat with Venables on the Riccard's committee, he wrote on the same day:

> You were pleased to assure me ... that one hundred Tuns of Brandy were put aboard the Fleet for the Land Men as well as the Sea Men. We find a very great failure in this, and our Men die daily, as the Physicians tell me, for want of it and Bread ... I am informed that much of our Cloathing is spoil'd at Sea with wet ... But I earnestly desire you to press hard for Swords, and Targets, and black Jacks; without the last not one man can march in these torrid Regions, where Water is precious and scant ... And if you forget Brandy, Bread, Meal, Pease, and Rice, never expect good of all that hath been expended, nor probably shall see us alive.[42]

Venables later claimed that there was plenty of brandy available but it was retained by the fleet. Before the fleet left England, he claimed, there 'was above a hundred [tuns], I think Two hundred Tuns of Brandy aboard the Fleet for Sea and Land Men; we took, as I was assur'd from General Penn and his Cousin Pool, above thirty Tuns more at Barbadoes, but I do not know that the Army ever had Ten Tuns whilst I was in the Indies.'[43] On 13 June in his last letter to the Lord Protector he wrote 'We have about 2000 men sicke: they dye daylye through want of bread and brandy.' The same day he informed Thurloe:

> Wee falle short both in bread, brandy, &c. of what was promised, and wee beleeved was provided for us. We have not a three weekes bread, and little cassavy in the countrey, of which the enemye steales a share. Our men dye dayley, eating rootes and fresh flesh (when any good is gott) without bread, or very little, wee not dareing on a suddaine to take them from bread, but by degrees accustom them to want that, which none will have five weeks hence at half a bisket a man per diem.[44]

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[39] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.575.

[40] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.48.

[41] Penn, *Memorials*, p.125.

[42] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.49–50.

[43] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.59–60.

[44] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.545.

Barrington also wrote home to his father on 6 June 1655 bemoaning the lack of bread and other provisions he and his fellow soldiers had to endure. He believed the only solution to be that they learn to grow their own food and so they needed 'to disperse ourselves into several parts of the country and plant those roots which would be in time very good food in the stead of English biscuit', and that 'I do believe bread will be very scarce amongst us.'[45] As early as 4 June Captain Howe was writing to his brother, 'For these Seventeen days we have had but three biskets of bread a Man, neither Officer, nor Soldier; and sometimes little or no Meat for two or three days together, and when God will send us supplies we know not.'[46]

With their commanders unable to provide them with food the soldiers were left to their own devices to survive. Once the meagre supplies in Santiago were consumed, the soldiers turned their covetous eyes upon the animals. Within days of their arrival all of the sheep and goats that pastured on the savannah had been killed for food. Castilla noted that 'Neither did the English spare any of the dogs, cats, colts, or donkeys which there bullets reached, so exceedingly hungry were they when they landed.'[47] Barrington recorded that 'our men betake themselves to horse flesh again',[48] anything to fill their stomachs. So hungry were the soldiers that 'dogs and cats were the best part of their diet'.[49] It reached such a stage when not one dog walked 'the streets that is not shott at, unlesse well befriended or respected'.[50] Even when the soldiers attempted to hunt the wild cattle which were abundant on the island they lacked the skills to successfully capture them, achieving little but scaring the cattle off to the more remote and inaccessible parts of the island. The scarcity of cattle led Venables to order a stop to the indiscriminate hunting, upon pain of death. Though no men are known to have been executed on this order, many 'rid the Wooden Horse' (a form of military punishment).[51] Hunting the cattle was to prove to be such a difficult task for the English that in 1657 Edward Doyley, the de facto governor of the island, decided to employ the specialist French *boucanes* from Tortuga to hunt for them on Jamaica.[52] Despite the death toll from sickness and disease it is apparent that many of the officers believed that it was the lack of food that was the main cause of death within the army. At a general muster of the army held on 9 June, it was found that it was 'so much diminished of late, not so much by any pestilence or violent disease, as for mere want of natural sustenance, which, in common reason, may seem strange, that, of all men, soldiers should starve in a cook's shop, as the saying is, or perish for want of food in a country so abounding with flesh, fish, and other vital provisions'.[53] Only days before this muster Barrington wrote of the pitiful condition of the army. He noted the army was 'in a very sad condition by our daily falling sick and many dying, occasioned by a former want of victuals, and those comfortable drinks which would support the spirits of our men ... so that our men daily perish ... for the future I cannot think that one of three amongst us will live.'[54] Venables echoed these thoughts in his letters to England at the time, and so it seems apparent that at this early stage in the occupation is was starvation, rather than illness, that put the most fear into the English.

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[45] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.571.

[46] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.41.

[47] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.5.

[48] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.574.

[49] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.387.

[50] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.142.

[51] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.45; Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.387; HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.574.

[52] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part Two', p.69.

One of the expectations of the expedition had been to create English colonies where there had previously been Spanish ones, which implies that settling the English on the land to cultivate food and cash crops, and exporting the surplus, would be a necessary means towards that end. Indeed, one of the reasons for selecting the islands as a first target was to use them as a base that could produce food to support further attacks along the mainland. Cromwell certainly thought that settlers from England, New England and from the other colonies in the West Indies would flock to these new possessions once occupied. It is therefore probable that some thought, and discussion, would have been had prior to the arrival of the English in the Caribbean concerning settling men on the land, for them to become self-sufficient in food production. Given that this was an anticipated necessary outcome it is perhaps surprising that the expedition did not, it seems, bring the necessary tools and seed with which to start these agricultural activities. None of the surviving lists of necessary provisions recommended by Riccard's committee provided before the expedition departed mentions the need for agricultural tools. Venables, in a letter to Martin Noel on 13 June, mentions that whilst they had brought some tools with them they were insufficient for their needs.[55] A list of additional supplies to be sent, drawn up in March 1655 by Riccard's committee, did recommend hoes, saws and other artisan and farming type tools be sent, but makes no mention of any sort of planting seed. But these tools, all necessary for farming, could not be expected to reach the expedition for many months after it would have arrived in the West Indies.[56] In fact if they were shipped at all, and the entries in *Doyley's Journal* for 1656 suggest that at least some were, the earliest they would have arrived would have been October when Sedgwick arrived. Goodsonn commented that these first tools sent were 'prooving of little worth' and that in future 'some honest knowing man' be employed to purchase more suitable and better quality implements.[57] That it was thought necessary to purchase 'twenty bushels of good English summer seed wheat' in Boston when three ships were sent there in June suggests that no seed had been shipped out from England.[58] It must have been common knowledge that it was to be expected that the land would need to be farmed if the expedition was to grow the food that it needed to consume, and therefore would have come as no surprise when the order was given, very early in June, that the army was to disperse and settle on the land with the expectation that it would start to grow food for its own sustenance.

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[53] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.388.

[54] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.571.

[55] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.49.

[56] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, pp.203–204.

[57] TNA, CO1/33, Privy Council and related bodies: America and West Indies, Colonial Papers (General Series), Addenda., 1656, f.64.

[58] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.94.

Buller's failure to locate and defeat the Spanish forces illustrated the reality of the situation facing the half-starved English army. Firstly, it would be necessary for the army to grow the food it needed for its own sustenance, as quickly as possible, and secondly, the English were facing resistance from the native inhabitants, living in the mountains, who would take every opportunity of harrying English attempts at planting. With incredible foresight the English realised that the Spanish could not be defeated by force and it would be necessary 'to famine the enemie',[59] by denying them the means to cultivate the food they needed. It was decided, early in June, to disperse the army into the hinterland to occupy the abandoned Spanish estates and plant crops for their own survival, and whilst doing so denying the Spanish the use of their plantations in an attempt to starve them and to avert starvation themselves. As a first step in this duel strategy Venables sent out another force, this time under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Michael Bland, into the Clarendon Plains to deny the Spanish access to any of the ranches or provisions available in that area and to force them into the remoter parts of the island from where it would be harder for them to interfere with the English. On 1 June Bland was ordered to march immediately to 'the river Minoa [the Rio Minho, in the Clarendon Plains], and to quarter in the Estantias about the hill [the extension of the Manatines that separated the Clarendon Plains from Anaya]'.[60] Bland's instructions were clear and detailed. He was 'to preserve all the plantations with those at Yama from the enemy, that they receive no reliefe from thence, and alsoe to take care that your owne men doe not ruine or spolye them'. His men were to be ordered not to take any cattle nor be 'permitted to digg any cassavy ... and that they do not spoyle any sugar cane or worke or fruit trees'. He was to secure any sugar, salt, hides with anything else useful, plus 'all materials for planting' and to transport them to Santiago. He was further instructed to seize 'all horses, carts, draughts, for raising horse and dragoons for the army'. He was ordered to 'hinder the soldiers from killing any tame cattle' and ensure an equitable distribution of any cattle that were killed. He was specifically instructed 'to block up the enemy in the hills, woods, and mountains' and where practical 'pursue the armie or enemy' and to undertake actions 'for the reducing of the enemy'. Any 'pillage or plunder' gained was to be brought 'into publique accompt' so that it 'may be divided equally for the general good'.[61] Captain How also noted that forces were sent to block the two known pathways up to the mountains to prevent the Spanish from coming into the plains, but as will be seen they were far from successful in this.[62]

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[59] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.138.

[60] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.47, 124.

[61] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.124.

At the same time, and 'for the better carrying on heerof a committee is appoynted for the benefitt of the country' to coordinate the distribution of the regiments on to land around Santiago.[63] The regiments' quarters were selected by lots, which was overseen by Venables personally, even though he was getting sicker by the day.[64] No clear evidence remains of how this process was undertaken, but many letters of the time acknowledge that this distribution of the army was being enforced, no matter how reluctantly the soldiers were to undertake it. One English observer confirmed this in a letter dated 1 June 1655 in which he stated Bland's force was to 'disperse and settle att severall plantations, where the other should follow in due time, to inhabit the country, which will be devided [*sic*] among the regiments, and every man to have his proportion of goods from the provence thereof, they manuring it themselves.'[65] Captain Daniel How of Carter's regiment, in a letter dated 4 June, informed his brother 'that now we are spreading our Army into the country to quarter and to prevent the Enemy from getting Provision, so also to plant for our own relief'.[66] Another officer, writing later in June 1655, specifically noted that the 'army was devided by regiments into severall quarters of the habitable parts of the countrey to plant guarrisons',[67] while on 9 June Venables, in a letter to Penn, confirms that at least Heane's old regiment, now commanded by Samuel Barry, had been allotted quarters in Liguanea.[68] Barrington, writing in July, also wrote of 'the plantations allotted for my coll's [colonel's] plantations and future quarters'.[69] Another letter to England, dated 15 July 1655, noted one of the reasons for Venables returning to England was petition for the arrears of the army's pay to be paid in a form other than in land. According to this anonymous writer a policy had already been put in place in Jamaica 'to invest each regiment with such a province or such partidos of land, which now they are cultivating, planting tobacco, Cassavi bread &c, for sustenance and trade'.[70]

According to Barrington, however, Bland was far from diligent in carrying out his instructions. He seemingly did little to engage the enemy and failed to secure the area. Within a fortnight of departing Santiago he was personally back, having left an unnamed major the responsibility to secure the region. The major then also returned to Santiago 'having neither relief or further orders'. Upon 'his quitting the enemy came down from the hills and burned most, if not all, the houses, yet the relief going for him was within two days' march of the place, so nigh that the houses were not devoured quite by the fire before our men came at them.'[71] However, Castilla wrote that Bland's force 'established themselves upon all the ranches and farms of Guatibacoa, without meeting with any resistance.' He further added that between this time and when he wrote is account (July 1656) the English 'planted beans and chickpease and other vegetables which they brought with them. They cultivated tobacco. They cleaned up the yuca fields, killing and curing meat, to send to sell in the town.'[72] Castilla's chronology is unclear at times, as is his placing of events on the ground, but he clearly implies that some attempts, even at this early stage in the occupation, were being made by the English, in multiple locations, to establish the sustainable cultivation of crops.

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[62] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.41.

[63] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.138.

[64] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.47.

[65] Anon., 'Letters Concerning the English Expedition', in Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.138.

[66] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.40.

[67] Firth (ed.), *The Clarke Papers*, Vol. 3, pp.59–60.

[68] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.93.

[69] HMC *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.574.

[70] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.141.

Bland's raid, ineffectual as it seems to have been, was one of many search and destroy missions in the Clarendon Plains and Anaya areas carried out in June and July which all helped to clear the regions of Spaniards, understand the topography, and identify the locations of Spanish settlements as well as allowing them to requisition both plunder and items that would prove useful as they began to settle their new colony. They had also recognised that there was a difference in attitude between the African-Caribbeans, who seemingly roamed freely across the land, and their former Spanish masters. Using intelligence from some friendly African-Caribbeans and from the two Englishmen who had been previously captured, the English were able to identify the locations of some Spanish settlements which they then raided in their search for provisions, and to try to capture any Spaniards they could find. At this point at least not all of the Spanish had fled into the mountains. The Spanish acknowledged that the English 'diligently sought to learn where our *maestre de campo* and the rich people were'.[73] One of the captured Englishmen was married to '[a] slave belonging to doña Joana de Fuentres, a rich widow' who lived on a plantation in Guatibacoa. He made this known to the English forces and her plantation was raided and she and her nephew, don Iñigo de Fuentres, as well as others of some standing were captured, whilst others made their escape into the bush. The English demanded 'money and jewels from doña Joana' which they received and they then 'divided the spoil on the road between a captain, a lieutenant and an ensign, giving don Iñigo a silver saltcellar and an opportunity to make his escape, which he took'. An English narrative describes don Joana as 'a Spanish lady ... who, were she as good as great, as virtuous as ponderous, and as fair as fat, certainly she would far exceed any three ladies in England, in worth, weight, and beauty.'[74] Another raid was made on the Anaguani ranch, also in Guatibacoa, around this same time but without any gain for the English. Presumably working off intelligence that persons of substance were holding up there the English arrived only to find the Spanish had fled, having been warned 'by their outguards' and '[the] Englishman was left, tired and befooled, having found neither plunder nor food, in more than twenty leagues of journey there and back'.[75]

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[71] HMC, *Portland MSS*, pp.574–575.

[72] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.15.

[73] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.16.

[74] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.388.

[75] Wright (ed.), *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, p.16.

Undoubtedly similar raids were being carried out at other locations across the plains as the English sort to make themselves master of the only substantial habitable land on the island, and as a preliminary to settling the land themselves. It is not clear if, at this stage, the regiments were allotted the permanent locations that they were to hold until the army was disbanded in 1662 as one modern writer suggests,[76] but it seems unlikely that all would have been, as both Barrington and Archbould later recounted that they were forced to move their plantations at different times, whilst there is clear evidence that regiments needed to be redeployed to new locations in early 1656 to counter the growing threat that the Spanish resistance was starting to pose.[77] However, Barry's regiment was certainly allotted quarters in Liguanea in early June 1655 and the remnants of the regiment were still there in 1662 when they were disbanded.[78] Therefore the English attempts at settling the land were hampered by strategic imperatives as their forces were moved from place to place as required, which would have inevitably affected their ability to farm successfully. Nevertheless efforts were made to start farming but that they were to a large extent ineffectual in the first few years of the occupation. A point worth noting is that this was an army of soldiers and not an army of farmers. The soldiers enlisted with the expectation to fight, to conquer and to gain plunder, not to become farmers, and as such there was much reluctance on behalf of the individuals in the army to take on the menial role of farmers, even though their existence might depend on it. Many lacked the skills to be successful farmers and certainly nearly all lacked the capital required to invest in the tools required, even if they were available. For many there was an expectation that the State was required to provide for their sustenance in return for their military service and it was not their responsibility to provide it for themselves. If the State had no need of the services of the army in Jamaica, or if they could not provide provisions for it, the solution was a simple as sending the army elsewhere to be employed, and provisioned, in the role for which it was designed. For some of those who survived the first appalling winter in Jamaica this dissatisfaction in being forced into becoming farmers was to coalesce into the mutiny led by Throckmorton in early 1656. That these first attempts at planting had failed is evidenced by the damning comments made by Sedgwick in a letter to Cromwell on his first arrival in Jamaica in November 1655, in which he wrote of the army that 'Dig or plant they neither can nor will, but do rather starve than work. They might have planted so much provision, as might have kept them alive. There is some little thing done in that kind, and but little; so that unless there be more supply of provisions, if the people live, they will perish for want of food.'[79] Perhaps this first failure at planting is not surprising with the majority of the army having died or were sick, having been deserted by their commander who left an ineffective command structure in his place, with no seed and few tools provided with which to plant and in a hostile environment where few of the English were even farmers, success was never likely to be achieved.

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[76] S.A.G. Taylor, *The Western Design: An account of Cromwell's expedition to the Caribbean* (London: Solstice Publications Ltd, 1969), p.67.

[77] Osborne and Taylor, 'Edward Doyley's Journal, Part One', pp.44, 52.

[78] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.93; Long, *A History of Jamaica*, p.614.

[79] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 4, p.154.

With the army starving and sick, alone in a foreign land with few provisions to hand and surrounded by hostile Spanish territory the English needed now, more than ever, decisive leadership from its commanders. But once again Venables was unable to rise to the task to which he had been assigned and to which many lives now depended on. As was his want Venables was to blame much of his problems on Penn and the fleet. Back in the safety of England Venables accused Penn of 'giving my men no Victuals, or too short in proportion' as well as 'denying to lend me Arms for those that wanted' both in Barbados and Hispaniola. Prior to the landing at San Domingo he blamed Penn 'for sending away our Guide' at the critical time prior to landing and for refusing to 'run the fleet into the Haven, Landing us against Vote and desire so far of the Town. And suffering the Seamen to Traduce me, about which I writ to him, or whether he could have acted more destructive to the design than what he did, let all rational Men judge.'[80] Penn's own correspondence of the time give doubt to the veracity of these statements, as it clear that he did much to assist the army with provision during the first few days after the landing.[81] The friction between the two regarding the handling of the captured Dutch prize ships, which had begun in Barbados, resurfaced in Jamaica as Penn readied the fleet to return to England. According to Venables the two became further estranged during these early days of the occupation when, according to Venables, Penn asked him to backdate Poole's commission as a Prize Agent and then accept his resignation so that he could return to England. Venables refused this and also told Penn he would not approve Poole's accounts in the disposal of the prizes as he had not even seen them, believing that something untoward was going on. In apparent retaliation Penn then asked Venables to account for the disposal of all the winter clothing, issued from navy stores to the army on the voyage from England, otherwise the navy commanders 'will assuredly be made at Home to pay for the same out of their own Purses'.[82] Undoubtedly Venables was attempting to shift the blame of the failure of the expedition from himself and onto Penn and this is clear throughout his *Narrative*, and so all his comments and assertions need to judged in light of this. Penn's correspondence, on the other hand, was written at the time of the events and in the form of routine orders, and so is not subject to the benefit of hindsight, nor is it pushing an agenda and so for this reason it might be considered a more accurate description of events than Venables' hyperbole. Most likely Penn did what he could to provide supplies for the army, limited as they were due to the very real shortages he faced, whilst at the same time reserving enough for his own crews, not just for the present but also ensuring enough to get his ships home when they departed. Whilst Penn undoubtedly had a low opinion of Venables and the way he handled the campaign, there is no evidence to prove that he deliberately attempted to hinder him or refuse to provide the army with what was available. The contrary is very much the case.

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[80] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.56.

[81] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.100–101, 105.

[82] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.56–57.

Not surprisingly the strained relations between the two generals, perhaps exaggerated by Venables later, affected the interaction between their respective commands as well. As a mark of how low trust between the two was already on Hispaniola the army refused to allow the Sea Regiment to embark first, fearing the fleet would then sail away and leave the army to fend for itself. Recognising this, Penn, in an obvious show of reconciliation, instructed the fleet to ensure an equitable share of food between the fleet and army once they had re-embarked. On Jamaica these tensions resurfaced when Venables complained that his officers and men were refused entry to the ships to retrieve their personal belongings in a timely manner and bring them ashore. It was claimed that some were even returned to England when Penn departed.[83] Penn for his part wrote to Venables on 22 May complaining that the day before some of his sailors 'were very unhandsomely treated by the soldiers of the guard at the landing-place, some of whom (as I am informed by persons of credit) were so rudely beaten and abused, that 'tis a doubt whether they will recover'. The cause of the altercation was the refusal of the sailors to take some of the soldiers aboard as the boats were being utilised for 'carrying officers and soldiers with their goods on shore'. Penn suggested, in another attempt at reconciliation, that separate boats be made available, by the fleet 'wholly to be employed in the service of the soldiers' and to be manned 'out of your own numbers, knowing there are many in the army well enough acquainted with the sea, and management of boats'. In a further attempt at allaying fears within the army that they were being cheated by the fleet he suggested to Venables that an officer of his own choosing be present to witness the weighing and distribution of provisions 'for the avoiding all errors or disputes therein in future.'[84] Whilst there was undoubtedly friction between the land and sea forces it is apparent that Penn at least attempted, on occasions, to diminish this distrust by taking a moderate and reconciling approach to their mutual dealings. There is no credible surviving evidence to suggest Venables reciprocated in this.

Relations between Venables and his officers also began to break down under the stresses they were all living under on Jamaica, undermining Venables' ability to command further. Many of the army officers were already disgruntled with both Venables' leadership style and his poor decision-making at Hispaniola, and they were incensed further on Jamaica when he overruled the council of war decision to march on Santiago on the night of the landing. These same senior officers were perhaps not a little embarrassed by how easily their commander had been hoodwinked by the Spaniards after the signing of the treaty, and his unnecessary delay in sending out a force to round up the enemy and enforce Spanish compliance. Barrington expressed the feelings of perhaps many of the officers when he wrote to his father in July regarding Venables' style of command. He wrote:

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[83] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.67–68.

[84] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.105–106.

> Sir, I profess unto you that if an impartial man had been here to view all transactions he would have found nothing in them but irregularities from the first of our landing in Hispaniola; the common course of our general and now major-general [Fortescue] is to do business (of what concerneth soever) without the advice of their cols., seldom or never calling them together, so that here is a great faction amongst us; and since our arrival here it is sad to relate how heavy we have been in spirits, as if we were not Englishmen.

He added further that these officers being excluded 'I think never was in any army in the world' and they 'are not so much valued here as captains were in England, for never since we came into this island that we have been summoned to any Council of War more than for punishing some criminal persons'. According to Barrington, Venables confided only with Fortescue and Holdip (both of whom played a leading role in the negotiations with the Spanish) and as the latter was lacking previous military experience this no doubt rankled many of the proud English army officers.[85] It is possible that some of these army officers were prepared to do more than just complain about Venables. In the general's last hurriedly written letter to England, dated 13 June and addressed to Thurloe, he hints that the army leaders were attempting to oust him from his command by forcing his return to England. He wrote 'Those with some reasons have moved the counsell of warre to desire me (if the Lord give health) to present our condition to his highnesse and counsell, with some expedients, which at present are not resolved upon; neither am I able to enlarge, haveing quite spent my spirits to give some competent accompte by generall Pen.'[86] Out of frustration of his inept handling of the campaign so far it is entirely plausible, and most likely desirable, that some of the regimental commanders hoped to convince Venables to return home under the excuse of fully explaining the plight of the army in an attempt to remove him from his command. Venables certainly believed this was the case.[87] Barrington went even further than this personal criticism of Venables in a letter to Desborough written at the same time. He informed Cromwell's confidant, in the full expectation that these criticisms would be brought to the attention of the Lord Protector himself, that:

> here is much discontent betwixt our generall and collonell Buller, collonel Carter, and collonel Doyly … occasioned by his irregular acting, they have not so much power here as his highness allowed the captaines (under his conduct) both in England, Scotland, and Ireland, neither hath he summoned them twice (since our arrival here) to consult about the safe disposall of this your poore army for the future; nay, that which is worst of all, he acteth as his will leadth him, notwithstanding the vote of the councill.[88]

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[85] HMC *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), pp.574, 575.

[86] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.545.

[87] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.60.

[88] HMC *Seventh Report* (Account of Francis Barrington), p.575.

Another matter that irked the senior officers was an order from Venables that no officer was to be granted permission to leave the island without the consent of his colonel, but then Venables proceeded to issue permits to officers to leave Jamaica without any approval of their regimental commander.[89] Even Edward Doyley found it hard to write anything good about his former regimental commander when asked in 1656.[90]

Not all the officers were critical of Venables however. Daniel How was gushing in his praise of the general when he described him as:

> a Godly, Valiant, discreet General, exposing himself to the greatest danger, and sharing with us in our wants, and one that did in his place endeavour the suppressing of Sin and the Promotion of Godliness, and one that I conceive would have done it more had he fit Instruments for his help in that kind, which I conceive was much wanting.[91]

Birkenhead was equally effusive when he wrote that he was:

> so justly and temperately discreet and active, so conscionably just and careful to relieve the oppressed, that truly we are thereby (if possible it could be) in a greater tye of duty to his Highnes for making such a provision for us in him: for he lays his shoulders so much to the work in hand that we are sometimes afraid lest he overturn himself; for his rest is hardly four hours most nights.[92]

Henry Cary, who as the secretary to the commissioners would have spent much time with Venables and so would perhaps have known him better than most, felt the need to write a deposition, shortly before he himself died in Jamaica, in defence of the general. He wrote:

> that having been an Eye Witness to all the proceedings of the Right Honourable General Robert Venables through the whole Course of this American Expedition, he judges in his Conscience and in the presence of God, that the said Right Honourable General Robert Venables is not in the least liable to those Malicious censorious reports which his Enemies Labour to asperse him withal.

He also exculpated him for any blame for the location of the landing place in Hispaniola.[93]

With many in the higher echelons of the English command disgruntled it was perhaps natural that consideration was given by some to return to England. On 18 May, the day after Ramirez signed the Spanish capitulation, Edward Doyley was sent to meet Penn and notify him that at a council of War of the army it had been agreed what ships the army required to remain in Jamaica, they being 'only necessary for carrying on the business; and the rest might be disposed of, as the general [Penn] should see cause.'[94] This proposition was discussed at a council of war of the fleet officers on 24 May. A crucial element of this discussion was the knowledge that 'the army hath no further occasion at present of the assistance of so many ships, being not upon thoughts of any new or considerable attempt elsewhere'.[95] In other words the army, meaning Venables, had already recognised as early as 18 May, just a week after their arrival in Jamaica, that it was by now incapable of conducting any further offensive operations in the West Indies and that some of the English force ought to be returned home. Venables at least seems to have accepted the realities of the situation at a very early stage and acknowledged that his broken, demoralised army was unable to do anything other than consolidate what had already been occupied. It is telling that it was the army that initiated the return of part of the fleet to England, it being too large for the now limited defensive needs of the army and too much of a drain on the finite food resources that the English had with them. Assuming Venables had made this decision, as surely only he could have done, he is to be commended for his prompt recognition that the expedition had come as far as it could and that retaining the services of the entire fleet in Jamaica would be counter-productive and perhaps even disastrous for the army, as it would consume much of the vital provisions that the army needed for its very existence. A number of reasons were put forward to justify sending part of the fleet home. These included to save provisions, that the army had no particular need for so many vessels now there being no 'thoughts of any new and considerable attempt elsewhere', that the Spanish seemingly had 'not any considerable naval strength in these parts' to warrant maintaining the current level of the fleet; also that 'the army hath signified their desire to have only remaining some frigates'. It was also argued that by sending most of the vessels to England 'that it will be an encouragement to others to come for these parts'. Further it was claimed that in light of the defeat on Hispaniola and with the fleet being 'a considerable part of the nation's strength by sea' and so their 'enemies, both without and within, might lay hold of this opportunity of our absence, to rise, and make some attempts at home'. The officers of the fleet duly agreed to the proposal to return a significant portion of the ships back to England.[96] By sending the fleet home an opportunity presented itself to some of the army officers to return as well.

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[89] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, pp.646, 647.

[90] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.28.

[91] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.46.

[92] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.159.

[93] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.54.

Penn, with his usual efficiency, delegated Dakins, Goodsonn and three of his senior captains to select which ships would remain and which would return. The same day Penn and his officers discussed the matter a list was presented to Penn naming the vessels to return to England as the *Swiftsure*, *Mathias*, *Discovery*, *Golden Cock*, *Rosebush*, *Sampson*, *Half Moon*, *Paragon*, *Lion*, *Bear*, *Heart's Ease*, *Cardiff*, *Marigold*, *Indian*, *Convertine*, *Catherine*, *Tulip*, *Westergate* and *Gilliflower*. In addition all of the Dutch prize ships would also sail for England and that Penn and Dakins would return as well, however Penn knew full well he had no orders to return. It was decided that each ship would take with them six weeks' food allowance and all ships would make ready immediately and that the six weeks allowance for the crews would take effect seven days from the date of the council of war, giving a departure date of around 1 June. In addition it was decided that three of the remaining ships, the *Adam and Eve*, *Falcon* and *Golden Falcon* would sail for Boston with two army officers to purchase provisions for the army and sell the hides that they had captured.[97] The remaining vessels, the *Torrington*, *Gloucester*, *Marston Moor*, *Laurel*, *Portland*, *Dover*, *Selby*, *Grantham*, *Martin*, *Arms of Holland*, *Hound* and *Falmouth* would remain in Jamaica under the command of Rear Admiral Goodsonn. The last three, being only 5th Rate vessels, were to be upgraded to men-of-war with the addition of extra guns and additional men. The *Arms of Holland* and *Falmouth* were to be immediately dispatched to the Cayman Islands where it was a rumoured that a flotilla of French vessels were to found, whilst the *Martin* was to be sent to Cartagena to gain intelligence of Spanish shipping in that port and to ascertain if they posed any immediate threat to Jamaica.[98] Penn's co-operative and inclusive style of command in these arrangements was a direct contrast to that of Venables.

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[94] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, p.104.

[95] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, p.106.

[96] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, pp.107–108.

Despite Penn's immediate agreement to the redeployment of the fleet it was to be another four weeks before he was able to depart for England. The ships had been at sea for over six months now, and many were in need to repair. Almost immediately after the English landed Penn gave orders for some of his ships to be careened on the landward side of the tombolo, to have their hulls cleaned and repaired. The *Hound* was actually beached on 11 May but it took until 19 May to complete the task and fully right the ship. The *Rosebush* was used to draw the *Hound* upright but during this process 'The minister's boy of the *Rosebush* was knocked overboard and drowned and one Robt. Allen, belonging to this ship [the *Hound*], was bruised in the skull but I hope will recover.'[99] Other ships destined to return to England were then similarly careened and with each taking over a week to complete the work it is not surprising that Penn needed a month to prepare his fleet for their homeward voyage. Sails and masts needed to be repaired, water casked and loaded, whilst provisions needed to be redistributed amongst those returning, but also it was necessary to leave some surplus equipment behind for Goodsonn's use. At a council of war on 6 June it was ordered that the departing vessels transfer to the *Marston Moor* all 'Pitch, tar, cables, anchors, blocks, Hawsers, pumps, Iron hoppes, Rivetts' as well other equipment that might be useful. Just days before Penn sailed it was ordered that the *Matthias*, *Bear*, *Heart's Ease*, *Paragon*, *Westergate*, *Marigold* and *Gilliflower* each deliver to Goodsonn a main topsail as well, whilst the *Indian*, *Convertine*, *Lion*, *Tulip*, *Rosebush*, and *Sampson* were to hand over a topsail. Penn also left Goodsonn with one thousand pounds in cash from the 'Contingent money' he carried aboard the *Swiftsure*.[100]

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[97] NMM, WYN/18, Letterbook, 26 Jul 1654–4 Sep 1655, includes list of ships in squadron, f.82.

[98] Penn, *Memorials*, Vol. 2, pp.107–108.

[99] Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal', pp.15–16.

[100] NMM, WYN/18, Letterbook, 26 Jul 1654–4 Sep 1655, includes list of ships in squadron, ff.71, 77, 88.

On 25 June, just as Penn was about to depart, he provided Rear Admiral William Goodsonn a commission 'to be commander in chief of the … squadron of ships to be continued out in these parts.' He was given the authority 'to order, manage, and command the same; and to do, execute, and perform in them all things and matters, in as full and ample manner, as if I myself were present'. Penn also gave Goodsonn a lengthy list of instructions 'for your better direction in the ordering and managing of the trust committed to you'.[101] These included directives to use 'your best endeavours (by all opportunities presenting) to seize, surprise, and take all ships and vessels belonging to the King of Spain, or any of his subjects in America', and in case of resistance to 'sink, burn, and destroy all such ships and vessels'. He was told to 'take care that such goods, ships, moneys, wares, and merchandises, which you shall take and upon, by virtue of the power given unto you by these instructions, be preserved without embezzlement' and to ensure a full receipt of all goods seized was made. He was similarly instructed to treat any French shipping in the same manner. He was also told to enforce the Navigation Act whenever necessary. He was given the authority to appoint and replace officers and was required to 'wear the jack-flag upon the maintopmast head during your continuance in the service aforesaid'. He needed to update the commissioners of the Admiralty and generals of the fleet regularly and to take instruction from the same. He was provided with 1,000*l* cash and was told to 'manage as thriftily as you may upon contingencies'. He was to keep his ships at sea to 'infest and annoy the enemy' as much as possible and to 'effectually assist, supply, and succour the army, to the best of your power'. With no suitable storage facility ashore to store provisions from England he was instructed to store these onboard his ships and that two ships 'may be left as guard for it, until such time as they [the army], by fortification of the port … shall secure it', and accurate records of all stores be maintained. Penn instructions concluded by stating 'whereas all particulars cannot be foreseen, nor positive instructions for such emergencies be before given, but that many things must be left to your prudent and discreet management'.[102] Penn, whilst he had no orders to return to England could, and did, argue his presence, being a general-at-sea, was no longer needed to command such a truncated naval force, especially as he left the command of those vessels that remained in the hands of such a competent commander as Goodsonn.

Penn had informed Venables on 12 June that he intended to depart of 14 June, but these plans were interrupted as the fleet was not ready, and so he aimed for 22 June instead, but due to 'the sea breeze coming, and blowing hard' the returning fleet was forced to remain at anchor where they remained for a full three days. On Monday 25 June, 'about break of day, the land breeze coming, we began to weigh … and … get under sail and, blessed be God for it, got safe through' the narrow channel that was the entrance to the harbour.[103] To return to England the fleet needed to pick up the westerlies off the coast of Florida to get it back across the Atlantic. Heading west the fleet planned to sail towards Cuba before heading north to pick up the westerlies that would take them home, but with contrary winds Penn found the sailing infuriatingly slow. On 13 July when the *Paragon* was lost he was still only off the coast of Cuba.[104] It took him almost a month to reach the Florida Keys and the entrance into the Atlantic for 'Having hitherto had the weather variously inclined, many calms, and some storms, with diversity of winds.'[105] Undoubtedly, whilst off Cuba, his thoughts had wandered to the possibility of intercepting the Spanish treasure fleet, *en route* from Cartagena, via Havana to Spain. Whilst no intent to attempt its capture is explicitly stated in any of the English sources, it was certainly within the parameters of his commission, it is alluded to in a letter from Penn to Goodsonn, dated Tuesday 24 July. The letter was sent aboard the *Humber* brigantine that was returned to Jamaica under Captain Sibada. In this letter Penn states:

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[101] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.582.

[102] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, pp.582–584.

[103] Battick, 'Richard Rooth's Sea Journal', p.20; Penn, *Memorials*, p.126.

> We have met but one sail[106] since we saw you [since he left Jamaica on 25 June], by whom we understand the plate-fleet is not yet come to the Havannah; and doubtless, if they hear of your lying on the coast near Carthagena [Penn means the *Martin* that had been dispatched there at the end of May], to intercept them, they will not put forth to sea; which, if they do not, 'tis likely that those who are already at the Havannah will not depart without them, and so they will lose the season of the year, and consequently prejudice the King of Spain's affairs very much; especially, now it's known we have a fleet in those seas. I know your diligence, and that you very well apprehend of what consequence the thing may be; therefore I shall say no more concerning it.[107]

This very much hints that a plan to try to intercept the Spanish plate fleet had been hatched prior to Penn's departure, with the *Martin* acting as lookout to notify Goodsonn when it departed Cartagena so he could pursue it. By 20 August Penn was off the Azores, he then spotted the Lizard on 30 August and anchored in Portland the following day, having been gone from England for just over eight months.[108]

Penn was never to know how close he came to intercepting the plate fleet. The Marqués de Montealegre had been dispatched by the King of Spain in early 1654 with a fleet to return the treasure currently awaiting shipment to Spain and after considerable delays he departed Cartagena on or about 3 July 1655[NS]/23 June 1655 [OS] with a fleet of eight galleons, filled to the brim with silver coins, ingots, gold and other precious items bound for Havana. Montealegre was aware of the English attacks on San Domingo and Jamaica so was naturally cautious to avoid being challenged by any English warships operating in the waters to the west of Jamaica. On 17 July 1655[NS]/7 July 1655 [OS], just off Cape de Corrintos, on the western most peninsular of the island, he spotted sails on the horizon. Contrary winds delayed his voyage for two days but he was then able to send a launch ashore to obtain more information as to the vessels he had spotted on the horizon. He learned that a fleet of 27 English warships were ahead, news that would have stunned the Marqués. Unsure if he had been spotted or if the English were planning an ambush somewhere along the north coast of Cuba, rather than risk his precious cargo he decided to make for the safety of the harbour at Vera Cruz in Mexico where he remained until news from Havana was received on 25 August 1655[NS]/15 August 1655 [OS] that Penn's fleet had left the Cuban coast. Had Penn but been able to see Montealegre's flotilla behind him, the last act of his ill-fated expedition might have been so much more successful. As it happens the Spanish might have preserved the treasure this time, but much of Montealegre's cargo would never arrive safely in Spain.[109]

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[104] Penn, *Memorials*, pp.126–127.

[105] Park (ed.), I.S. – *A Brief and Perfect Journal*, p.389.

[106] Probably the *Raven*, a 'small Dutch man-of-war' was intercepted but released as being of little value to the English.

[107] Penn, *Memorials*, p.128.

[108] Penn, *Memorials*, p.130.

During the month that it took Penn to ready his vessels Venables' health deteriorated. On 13 June he informed Thurloe he was 'soe weake after a five weeke's fluxe, onely some few days intermission'.[110] By 14 June he was unable to meet with Penn as he had planned due to his 'distempers and the doctor's advice'. On 19 June he informed Penn 'I am at present very ill and not in a condition to do anything but what neccesity enforces.'[111] Venables confirms that in early June he had left the day-to-day command of the army to Colonel Richard Fortescue due to his illness. Most likely, only days before Penn departed and with Venables believing he was about to die, he requested Penn and Butler visit him so that they could formally appoint Fortescue as commander-in-chief, but according to him neither did for at least a day. Despairing, he called together some of his senior officers, and with Penn, but not Butler in attendance, resigned his command in their presence and appointed Fortescue in his place, which was duly countersigned by Penn. Fortescue's commission was dated 24 June. Butler was later asked to give his concurrence to this action but refused to for reasons he never seems to have explained.[112] Venables later claimed that the day after Penn departed he 'fell into a Calenture ... [and] I continued in this distraction about one Month, and was then in that condition carried on board ... for at Land I could not live, and at Sea perhaps I might recover, and if not, it was not material whether Worms or Fish eat that poor and almost consumed remainder of me.'[113] He gives no date on which he was carried on board the *Marston Moor*, but it was probably mid July and his *Narrative* concerning the circumstances surrounding his departure are confusing and vague. Whether he himself gave the order for the *Marston Moor* to send him home, or if the council of war made the decision for him is also unclear, although Barrington advised

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[109] Don Diego Portichuelo de Rivadeneyra, *Relación del viaje y sucessos que tuvo desde que salió de la ciudad de Lima, hasta que llegó a estos Reynos de España*, (Madrid:1657) pp.9–10. See also Dave Horner, *Shipwreck: A Saga of Sea Tragedy and Sunken Treasure* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1999) pp.60–61, for a translation of this Spanish source as well as a fascinating description of Montealegre's voyage.

[110] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.545.

[111] HMC, *Portland MSS*, Vol. 2, pp.95, 96.

[112] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.66; Birch (ed.), TSP, Vol. 3, pp.674, 681, 582.

[113] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.66–67.

Desborough he was leaving 'without the consent of … the colonels'.[114] What is clear is that from early June, when Fortescue presided over the council that decided to send Buller back to England with Penn, Venables was beginning to lose his ability to command as his sickness intensified and Fortescue took on more duties, and that after 19 June he held effective command but whether by virtue of Venables' resignation, or just out of necessity, is unclear. Venables played no role in the drafting of a petition signed by 15 of the most senior officers addressed to the Lord Protector himself on 18 July, which requested clarification as to how the army and new colony were to be administered.[115] This declaration suggests it was written by the officers who at the time knew full well that Venables was departing for England and that his departure was imminent. It is most likely that Venables himself left Jamaica within a few days of 23 July when Fortescue wrote to the Lord Protector advising him that he had been unable to convince Butler to remain in Jamaica. Venables arrived back in England on 9 September.[116]

Why then did Venables choose to leave his army behind and return to England? In his later defence he gave many reasons for returning. According to Venables he had an agreement with Thurloe prior to departing for the West Indies that 'if the air agreed not with me I might thereupon return home', with his command in Ireland kept open for him. He also claimed that the physicians in Jamaica had diagnosed that it was not possible for him to live there, for 'what stop'd my Flux heighten'd my Fever, and what abated my Fever encreased my Flux'. The officers, in his absence, so he later claimed, voted for him to return to England to 'Solicite their affairs, as being unable to do any Service there' (but this is contrary to Barrington's statement that he specifically did not have the approval of the officers to return), but that he remained in Jamaica for six weeks after this in the hope that he regained his health. When he was examined before Cromwell and the Council of State on the grounds of returning without orders he attempted to produce the signed decision of the officers to send him home, but the Council refused to let him present it. With a degree of amnesia related to the full extent of the objectives of the expedition, he also claimed that he had successfully fulfilled his instructions by establishing a colony in the West Indies and with no enemy attempting to resist him he had completed his mandate. He also declared that his return was sanctioned by the remaining commissioners. Finally, he justified his return by the procedure Cromwell had himself instigated for the appointment of a new commander-in-chief by virtue of a blank commission only to be opened 'in Case of Death, disability, or absence of one or both the Generals'. He was to argue that his illness precluded him from conducting his role as general, and that Penn's countersigning of the commission in favour of Fortescue was sufficient evidence of him being disabled from performing his duties and that he was replaced in the appropriate manner.[117]

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[114] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.647.

[115] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.62–65.

[116] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.104; Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.674.

[117] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.102–104.

Certainly he was very sick and for some weeks he had been unable to provide effective command of the English forces, and so self-preservation would have been a major factor in this decision. However, he was not the only sick English soldier and he certainly did not allow all the others that were sick the opportunity to leave for home, and so without doubt he used his authority to his own benefit, whilst leaving the men he had a duty and responsibility to command and protect to their fates. Selfishness can certainly be added to the list of Venables' many faults. Venables would have known that he had failed in his leadership of the expedition. Despite some extenuating circumstances over which he had no control on Hispaniola, it was obvious to all that the fiasco was down to him and him alone, whilst a further series of poor judgements on Jamaica had botched the surrender of the Spanish colony. He was well aware that his position in the army and society back in England was based on the patronage offered him by the Lord Protector, which in turn was based on his reputation as a successful soldier. Once the news reached England that the disaster was in no small part caused by his own actions his reputation would be in tatters, especially if he was unable to defend himself being on the other side of the world, or even dead. In an age when honour and reputation were the markers of a man's character and could define his life and livelihood, Venables would have believed it vital that he should defend his actions, no matter how poor they were. Inevitably he would be judged by all and sundry in England based on the outcome of the expedition, irrespective of the true reasons for failure, especially if he was not able to provide a counter-argument, and so this on its own provided him with a significant incentive to return home. Added to this was the knowledge that Penn would arrive in England before him and so would have the first word on what had happened and very likely lay the blame on Venables, whom the admiral held in very poor regard.

Perhaps inevitably without an overall commander of the expedition relations between the fleet and the army were always going to be fractious, as both services strove to serve their own best interests, frequently at the expense of the other. Understandably this had an effect upon the relationship between Penn and Venables, which did not start out well. As the fleet readied to sail Cromwell was moved to write to Penn notifying him that he had been made aware of 'a little dissatisfaction' that remained between the two generals. What caused this was not revealed but it is probably easy to guess that the stress of preparing the expedition had caused friction between the two, as both rushed to prepare their separate commands for departure. The army was naturally entirely dependent on the fleet for loading provisions, supplies and embarking the soldiers and conflict was bound to occur when responsibilities overlapped and when it seemed one was interfering with the other. Indeed Cromwell specifically noted that 'You have your owne command full and entire to yourselfe, nothing interfeiringe with it, nor in the least lesseninge you. The command at laud is alsoe distinct, and there the generall at land must exercise his authoritye, and thus I trust you will both consent to carry on the publique work without hesitation, and God forbid that anythinge in you or hym should in the least hinder that.'[118] According to Venables, Penn had taken umbrage when Venables was named first on their commission, and so this might have been the cause of the rift.[119] Recognising that petty jealously between the two of them could be catastrophic to the outcome of the expedition, Venables stated later that he approached Penn once aboard and told him 'that without mutual agreement betwixt us all would be destroy'd' and that if the design miscarried then 'none would bear the blame but he and my self'. He added that both their reputations, as well as that of their country and God, were at stake and that he 'desir'd that there might be that joint affectionate assistance of each to other in all things as might enable ourselves to discharge our trust, and discourage any that might endeavour to sow Division betwixt us, which would ruin us'. The pragmatic Penn recognised this 'and we engag'd Solemnly to each other' to ensure there would be no discord between the two.[120] Winslow alluded to this accord in his letter from Barbados to the Lord Protector when he:

> told you how easily that soare was cured betweene Venables and Penn, whose demeanor mutually towards every other at sea was sweet and hopefull; but the last of these two gentlemen is too apt to be taken with such concepts; but I trust all will be well; onely I feare that going hence without our stores some occasion will arise of disturbance between the land and sea forces.[121]

Whilst it is true that throughout the campaign both generals remained on courteous and professional terms with each other, dissension between them was a constant. Venables' open quarrel with Desborough over the quality of the provisions provided by the fleet in England probably started the rift and this was soon followed in Barbados by Venables' virtual accusations of misconduct, if not outright fraud, in the handling and disposal of prize goods by the fleet. Venables' mood was not improved by the fleet's insistence that prize goods were to be dealt with by the fleet rather than by the commissioners, as he claimed they ought to be, contrary to naval tradition as they were an Admiralty prerogative. Constant disputes over the issuance and quantity of provisions, as well the less than accommodating provision of weaponry from fleet stores, widened the rift to such an extent that prior to the landing at Hispaniola the army officers felt the need to seek assurances from the fleet that they would not abandon the army once landed. From the army's perspective the fleet deliberately withheld the use of the main guide, Cox, and then refused an attempt to disembark them under the walls of the city. The army blamed Goodsonn outright for his inability to disembark the army at the River Hine, whilst Henry Cary even went so far as to claim Goodsonn had received no orders from Penn to even land the army on the River Hine.[122] The army frequently complained that it was inadequately provided with provisions by the fleet once it had landed. The defeat of the army led to derision from the seamen and salacious gossip soon circulated below decks about Venables and his wife whilst it was reported that the seamen referred to the soldiers as 'dogs to be left to the enemy, and to set sail for England; this being so horrid a motion my Soul detested it.'[123] Prior to re-embarking at Hispaniola the army refused to let the Sea Regiment board first out of fear that the fleet would sail away leaving them stranded. As a further indication of how broken relations between the services were by then, Penn was required to order his seamen to ensure they gave the soldiers the same rations as they themselves received. On Jamaica there were constant complaints from the army that they received short measure when the food was distributed, while tempers flared and fights broke out over access to longboats that could be used by the army to retrieve their personal possessions that remained aboard the fleet. Soon Penn was being accused of deliberately withholding provisions from the army, who were beginning to starve ashore. It is worth noting that after both Penn and Venables had departed relations between the army and the fleet settled down and there are no further reports of disharmony between the two services, and so it is safe to speculate that the personalities of both generals did much to foster the unrest between them. Despite this there is no contemporary evidence that suggests that relations between Penn and Venables broke down completely during this period, and Venables' later accusations that Penn deliberately sought to undermine the army only surfaced after he returned to England. On the contrary there is a fair amount of evidence that suggests that Penn tried hard to accommodate Venables' repeated requests for food and supplies, when he could and within the limits that restricted his assistance. The last letters that passed between the two, on 21 June, were as always polite and businesslike. Penn reminded Venables of:

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[118] HMC, *Portland MSS*, Vol. 2, p.89.

[119] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.78–79.

[120] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.56.

[121] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.219.

[122] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.24.

> [the] mutual Promise made solemnly between us (as in the presence of God) of Love and affection to be Conserved inviolably between us, and how that if any sower of sedition should endeavour to dissolve so sacred a Tie, to discover such Persons and projects either to other. I for my part have and do firmly adhere to the same, and hope you are like minded.[124]

Venables, by now desperately ill, responded, 'I have a little more of a Gentleman in me than to break any promise or engagement of Peace and love, having never been of a Contentious Spirit, and will be found as true of my word as any person in the World shall be.'[125] In these last letters, as with all the letters between the two, there is no trace of personal enmity and yet almost as soon as Venables returned he unleashed a tirade of vitriol towards Penn. A possible explanation for this might be seen in Venables' belief that the Admiral reneged on an agreement made between the two of them in an effort to obtain his release from the Tower of London. According to Venables, at an undisclosed time, Penn had desired Venables never to 'acknowledge any fault' or admit responsibility for the failure of the expedition, which Venables willingly agreed to for he 'knew no fault I was guilty of'. Throughout the examination Venables was subjected to whilst a prisoner in the Tower he never admitted any wrong doing until he was made aware that Penn had himself acknowledged his own faults and had subsequently obtained his release a week before Venables did. It is clear that Venables saw Penn's actions as dishonourable and done simply to get his own release despite their agreement.[126] Perhaps this explains why Venables in his later account subjects the Admiral to accusations he never made during the expedition. However, there is no evidence that Penn criticised Venables' handling of the army or said anything derogatory about him on his return. The notes made when Penn appeared before the Council of State on 12 September to explain the situation in Jamaica make little mention of Venables at all, and certainly none were negative of him.[127] Penn, like Venables, was required to admit that he returned to England without instruction before he was released from the Tower.[128] That Venables was bitter about his treatment on his return is understandable as he genuinely believed he was a victim of circumstance rather the instigator of his own downfall. Overstating his own self-importance, he most likely believed that he had been set up to fail when he deludedly wrote after his release, 'That I was popular in Ireland, had too much Interest there, and that they knew not how to displace me, or free themselves from me, but by such a removal as might occasion Death.'[129]

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[123] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.32.

[124] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.57.

[125] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.58.

But Penn was not the only commissioner who Venables had reason to fear, for Gregory Butler was another, and this undoubtedly played a part in his decision to return. Evidently a rift between Venables and Butler had been brewing for some time prior to the arrival of the English in Jamaica. It seems likely Venables deliberately sent Butler to the Leeward Islands to recruit in an attempt to remove his disruptive influence away from the army, or as Venables later put it he was sent 'lest his stay at Barbadoes should disgrace us'.[130] Venables believed Butler was involved with the selling of the prize ships, which he believed had been disposed of in a manner contrary to the instructions given to the commissioners by Cromwell.[131] In Hispaniola Butler accompanied the army, and according to Venables, Butler insisted that Venables trust the Irishman that they found at de Mieses' sugar mill and who many believed at the time led the English into the first ambush.[132] Venables was certainly put out by Butler's perceived interference in military matters and reluctantly agreed to use the Irishman as a guide, but this incident says as much about Venables' inability as a commander as it does about Butler's interference, but it nonetheless further fuelled the hostility between the two commissioners. Friction between the two flared again in Jamaica where, according to Butler, 'the inconsidered treatye' that Venables conducted with the Spanish 'permitted them to march away'. This 'occasioned highe words betwixt himselfe and mee' in the presence of Penn.[133] On 23 May Venables wrote to Penn informing him of Butler's intention of leaving for England and that:

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[126] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.87.
[127] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 4, pp.28–30.
[128] Everett Green (ed.), *CSPD 1655*, p.396.
[129] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.88.
[130] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.60.
[131] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.59.
[132] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.27.

> I suppose he will allege our jarre to be the reason. I shall therefore desire that I might have notice when he goes, that soe I may goe hand in hand with him to justifie myselfe. For I have cause to believe he intends to cast dirt in my face, and to staine my reputation which I valuied dearer than my life.[134]

Venables believed that Buller was actively attempting to undermine his authority as commander in Jamaica and in this he was supported, if not encouraged by Butler.[135] In a letter written to the Regicide Owen Rowe, dated 14 June, which was to be sent with Penn to England, he explained the cause of this 'jarr' with Butler. He accused Butler of 'setting the Officers in disgust against me, of which several complaints were made unto me'. Venables confronted Butler with this and 'indeed call'd him drunken sot', he being so drunk on St. Christopher when in discussions with the French inhabitants 'he fell from his Horse and vomited' to which there were many witnesses, and whom 'my Lord Protector was much derided by them for employing such a man'. He warned Rowe that should Butler cast any blemishes on either himself or the army that the Council of State 'will not Credit any rumours, but leave their own thoughts free till they have heard all Parties, and judge upon clear proofs and Grounds of reason'.[136] Venables later accused him of 'neglecting his Highness' affairs' in Jamaica and although he tried to persuade Butler to act with more decorum, and as befitted his position, instead he 'being disgusted hereat associated himself with all discontented Persons, and made it his Business to rail upon and revile me' at every opportunity he could.[137] Venables also imagined that this animosity between the two of them took a more sinister turn when he appointed Fortescue as his replacement in the presence of, amongst others, Buller and Butler. According to Venables 'Butler finding Symptoms of Death upon me, he and Buller smil'd upon each other (which I observ'd with some trouble of mind).'[138] Butler refused to endorse the appointment of Fortescue, although it was seemingly conducted in a proper and transparent manner, and even refused Fortescue's remonstrance that he should remain in Jamaica being the only commissioner available.[139] Certainly Venables feared what Butler might say about him once he returned to England, and this inevitably was one of the motivations that led Venables to return home. There is, however, no surviving record of Butler's reasons for himself returning nor of what he informed Cromwell of about the proceedings of the expedition or Venables' part in them, when he returned at the same time as Venables. It is perhaps telling that he received no censure for returning to England without orders despite Venables' vengeful offer to 'prove high debauchedness and fomenting of Mutinies against him'.[140] He was later actively encouraged by the Council of State to fit out a privateer to attack Spanish shipping in the West Indies, and he was also later considered for a governor's post.

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[133] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.755.

[134] HMC, *Portland MSS*, p.92.

[135] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.60.

[136] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.50.

[137] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.60.

[138] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.66.

[139] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.104–105.

Venables had another critic in Colonel Anthony Buller, who returned to England with him and whom Venables accused of attempting to turn the senior officers against him in Jamaica, and he was probably worried about what he would say about him also.[141] The split between the two might have originated with Buller's unauthorised march on San Domingo which meant he left the ford across the River Hine unmarked, necessitating Venables to spend another day without food or water in his attempt to cross the river. He also believed it was this reckless action of Buller's that encouraged the Spanish to lay the ambush into which Venables blindly marched on 17 April, and he was supported in this view by Holdip.[142] Buller was able to orchestrate a council of war, against the wishes of Venables, on 7 June in Jamaica and without him being present, at which he convinced his fellow officers of the necessity of sending one of them to England to state the case of the army and 'to represent the Condition of the Army and this Island', rather than rely on any written testimony of Venables. The officers concurred and duly appointed Buller to be their spokesman in England, a move that was a clear vote of no confidence in their general and done without the general's approval.[143] It is not clear why Buller did not return to England with Penn and he only sailed for England at the same time that Venables departed.[144] There is no evidence that he was disparaging of Venables once he returned, however. Nevertheless it seems that Buller did have the opportunity to represent the army before the Lord Protector, and indeed many of the suggestions made by the army officers in their July petition were subsequently acted upon by the government. Venables admits in his *Narrative* that when he was called before the Council of State to explain his unauthorised return he attempted to justify it on the grounds that he had been instructed by the officers to represent them, but these grounds were immediately dismissed when the Council informed him that 'Coll. Buller was the Army's Agent',[145] which implies they accepted the legitimacy of Buller's return. Buller received no censure, and though he was not employed by Cromwell again, he served in Parliament in 1659 and 1660, and later in the army under Charles II.[146]

Venables sick, wearied, defeated and vulnerable lacked the physical strength or moral courage to remain in Jamaica. Surrounded by critics as he was, perhaps the only person he could rely upon to protect him was his wife, and it would only be natural that she played a role in his departure, out of love for him and a fear that he might die if he remained. In the end Venables lost control of the situation once again and was carried helplessly aboard the *Marston Moor*, leaving his army to their fate whilst he was shipped home to England, where his own fate would be decided. Venables tried hard to justify his handling of the expedition and his reason for abandoning the army but was never able to clear his name. He blamed Desborough for the lack of provisions, he blamed the poor quality of the army and their equipment, Penn for not supporting him with adequate supplies, and he blamed the climate, disease and his officers. In fact he blamed everybody but himself and argued he was the poor victim of circumstance. In truth he failed as he was just not suitable for such a command, and when he saw his opportunity to leave he just went, thinking more of his reputation than of the army he left behind. Arriving in England his reputation was in tatters and with Cromwell in no mood to be forgiving he had Venables and Penn committed to the Tower of London once both had provided their excuses, although both were soon released after acknowledging their responsibility for the disaster but neither were employed by him again. With Winslow dead, Searle in Barbados and Venables, Penn and Butler all en route for England, the English army was now leaderless and Cromwell's grand design in pieces. Abandoned, Fortescue and Goodsonn with the remnants of the English forces were left to fend for themselves 5,000 miles from home.

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[140] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.104.

[141] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.60.

[142] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.23, 27.

[143] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, pp.61–62, 65.

[144] Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 3, p.646; Birch (ed.), *TSP*, Vol. 4, p.32.

[145] Firth (ed.), *The Narrative of General Venables*, p.74.

[146] B.D. Henning, *The House of Commons, 1660–1690: Introductory survey. Appendices. Constituencies. Members A–B* (History of Parliament Trust, 1983), p.747.

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Century of the Soldier 1618-1721

In 1655 Oliver Cromwell, England's Lord Protector, sent a fleet to attack and seize Spanish possessions in South America. The English were flexing their muscles on the international stage and for political, religious and commercial reasons chose to attack a weakened Spain in the West Indies believing it a soft target. In late 1654 possibly the largest military force to date ever to leave English shores set sail from Portsmouth under the command of General Robert Venables and Admiral William Penn.

This is the first of two volumes about the English attack on the Spanish West Indies. This volume extensively analyses the reasons for the English attack, its preparations and plans, and the composition of their army and navy. It describes first the voyage to the West Indies and the expedition's delay in Barbados and then the attack on Hispaniola, including the many reasons for its dramatic failure. The book then describes the occupation of Jamaica, the beginnings of the Spanish resistance as well as initial English naval operations in the Caribbean in 1655. The English forces were quickly abandoned by their two commanders and left to fend for themselves, facing rampant disease, near starvation and an undefeated enemy. The second volume will continue the story from late 1655 up to the establishment of English civilian government in Jamaica in 1662.

This work draws upon extensive primary source material from England and Spain including a copious quantity of letters and narratives of soldiers and sailors present, from both sides. It is the first detailed account of this important campaign from a military perspective, one that laid the foundations for the state-sponsored expansion of the English empire.

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